

# THE LIVING AGE.

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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
1. French Fiction : the Lowest Deep, . . . . .	<i>National Review</i> , 451
2. Concerning Scylla and Charybdis, . . . . .	<i>Fraser's Magazine</i> , 469
3. The Ammergau Mystery ; or Sacred Drama of 1860, . . . . .	<i>Macmillan's Magazine</i> , 482
4. Science and Arts for September, . . . . .	<i>Chambers's Journal</i> , 495
5. An Old Woman's Story, . . . . .	<i>Ladies' Companion</i> , 498
6. The Papal Allocution, . . . . .	<i>Saturday Review</i> , 511

POETRY. — Brennus at the Scales, 450. A Score of Years ago, 450. Purgatory, 468. Exit Bombalino, 468.

SHORT ARTICLES. — American Rivers, 467. Magnetic Declination, 467. George I.'s Will destroyed by George II., 467. Garibaldi a Canadian, 481. Sanding before the Door at Marriages, 481. An Officer in Wolfe's Army, 481. A Shark gives Evidence against a Slaver, 481. The Moving Glaciers, 510. Spiritual Songs, 510. Periodical Literature, 510. Local Superstition : Cornwall, 512.

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## BRENNUS AT THE SCALES.

AGAIN the hills of Italy  
 Echo the din of war,  
 Again the eagles gather  
 To Rome, from near and far,  
 Again the seven-hilled city,  
 The conqueror's guerdon stands,  
 But not, as erst, with conquest's sword  
 Held in Barbarian hands !

When Rome, an infant giant,  
 First crowned her seven-fold height,  
 The stalwart North its swarms poured forth  
 To crush the rising might.  
 There strode the swarthy Cymry,  
 The red Gaul at his side,  
 And tower and town went helpless down,  
 Before the sweeping tide.

But Heaven's high purpose needed  
 That rising Roman power,  
 And nerved the stately senators  
 To meet the awful hour.  
 In robes of white, on chairs of state,  
 'They barred the invaders' way—  
 'Gainst Cymric fire and Gaulish ire,  
 A weaponless array !

How changed the men, how changed the parts  
 The scene alone the same.  
 Now Heav'n strikes with the invaders,  
 And works the invaded shame.  
 For patriot hands, see hireling hands,  
 The mass-book for the glaive ;  
 A fluttered, epicæne old priest,  
 For senate stern and grave !

Still holdeth well the parallel—  
 Like in unlikeness all—  
 On what is done doth still look on,  
 A Brennus, chief of Gaul !  
 Not frank and bold like him of old,  
 That led the Cymric horde,  
 But a masked brow—a muffled hand,  
 That grasps a doubtful sword !

Again the steelyard is brought forth,  
 Again Rome's fate is weighed :  
 Though other weights are in the plates,  
 Than those of yore displayed.  
 Old Rome went free—her ransom-fee,  
 A thousand pounds of gold,  
 Now, Europe's hopes against a Pope's  
 Unequal balance hold !

Strange, how despite the ill-matched freight  
 The scales uncertain play,  
 While still as death—with bated breath,  
 We watch them as they sway.  
 And well we know—he't weal or woe  
 That in the upshot lies—  
 The scale where Brennus flings his sword  
 Will be the scale to rise !

Were this a man our wit could scan,  
 The choice might easy seem ;  
 Small doubt were there which scale would bear  
 To earth, which kick the beam.

With fear and lies, before our eyes,  
 'Gainst truth and valor hung,  
 Were his a hand at our command,  
 Long since the sword were flung !

But what is truth and what is ruth,  
 What human hopes to him ?  
 Whose tortuous ways elude our gaze,  
 So molelike, dark, and dim !  
 One thing alone to faith is known,  
 Heaven wills what'er befall—  
 And this man's hand, and this man's brand,  
 Are God's that guideth all !

—Punch.

## A SCORE OF YEARS AGO.

Down by the breaking waves we stood,  
 Upon the rocky shore ;  
 The brave waves whispered courage,  
 And hid with friendly roar  
 The faltering words that told the tale  
 I dared not tell before.

I asked, if with the priceless gift,  
 Her love, my life she'd bless ?  
 Was it her voice or some fair wave,—  
 For, sooth, I scarce may guess,—  
 Some murmuring wave, or her sweet voice,  
 That lisped so sweetly " Yes."

And then, in happy silence, too,  
 I clasped her fair wee hand ;  
 And long we stood there, carelessly,  
 While o'er the darkening land  
 The sun set, and the fishing-boats  
 Were sailing from the strand.

It seems not many days ago—  
 Like yesterday,—no more,  
 Since thus we stood, my love and I,  
 Upon the rocky shore ;  
 But I was four-and-twenty then,  
 And now I'm forty-four.

The lily hand is thinner now,  
 And in her sunny hair  
 I see some silvery lines, and on  
 Her brow some lines of care ;  
 But, wrinkled brow, or silver locks,  
 She's not one whit less fair.

The fishing-boats a score of years  
 Go sailing from the strand ;  
 The crimson sun a score of years  
 Sets o'er the darkening land ;  
 And here to-night upon the cliff  
 We're standing hand in hand.

" My darling, there's our eldest girl,  
 Down on the rocks below ;  
 What's Stanley doing by her side ?"  
 My wife says, " You should know :  
 He's telling her what you told me  
 A score of years ago."

—Once a Week.

W. L. W.

From The National Review.

FRENCH FICTION : THE LOWEST DEEP.

*Les Mystères de Paris ; Atar-Gul.* Par Eugène Sue.

*La Dame aux Camélias ; Le Demi-Monde, un drame ; Le Roman d'une Femme.* Par Alex. Dumas, fils.

*Monte-Christo.* Par Alex. Dumas, père.

*Fanny, une étude.* Par Ernest Feydeau.

*Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle.* Par Alfred de Musset.

*Elle et Lui,* par George Sand. *Lui et Elle,* par Paul de Musset. *Lui,* par Mme. Louise Collet.

It is hard to say whether the current politics or the current literature of France conveys the more vivid impression of utter and profound demoralization;—the willing servitude, the craven fear, the thirsty materialism, the absence of all liberal sentiment or noble aspirations, indicated by the one,—the abandonment of all self-control or self-respect, the surrender of all manliness, dignity, or reticence, the hunger after the most diseased, unholy, and extravagant excitement,—or the intense and unrebuked selfishness, the passionate and slavish worship of wealth and power, which is the basis and the soul of both alike. Of course, there are exceptions in literature as in life. But we speak of the prevalent, the almost universal tone; we speak of the acting, voting, deciding, characterizing mass in the one case, and of the books of the widest circulation, and the writers of the most popular repute and the most signal success, in the other. In politics there still exist a few men—fewer, alas, each day, as their numbers are thinned by death or by despair—the salt of the earth, but far too scanty to give it savor, the five righteous men, but not enough to save the city,—who mourn over their degradation and resent their shame, who “rowing hard against the stream,” strive manfully, and strive to the last, to warn their countrymen and to purify and rouse their country. But the *national life*, the political aspect of France, is undeniably what we have described it: the vast majority of the people in nearly every class, lost to all sense of personal dignity or public justice, is devoted to the pursuit of wealth and luxury, and ready to acquiesce in any *régime* and to worship any ruler that fosters this pursuit; and questions or kicks against despotism only when, in a momentary aberration of

far-sightedness, it touches their immediate purse;—while even the constitutionalists, as they term themselves—the liberal *frondeurs*—are far more angry at us for fraternizing with their despot than with themselves for tolerating and enthroning him, and hate him almost more bitterly for the unintentional aid he has rendered to Italian liberties than for his cynical, perfidious, and sanguinary extinction of their own. So in literature—especially in that branch of it in which alone there is or can be much activity at present, and with which we are now more immediately concerned, the literature of fiction—there are still a few writers who vainly offer to their countrymen from time to time a repast refined in tone and irreproachable in taste and morals;—but the public appetite has been too long and too deeply vitiated to appreciate what is natural and pure, and turns away with a contempt which is almost loathing from dishes unseasoned by the voluptuous, the morbid, or the monstrous. From time to time noble and sound criticism appears in the more respectable reviews and journals, but it is powerless to alter the demand or to arrest the supply of the article the public asks for; the novels which are for the most part popular—the only ones that are run after, the only ones that *pay*, either in fame or money—are exclusively those which pander to the worst passions and the worst taste; till, without exaggeration, it is as rare to find a successful French novel that is not scandalous as an English one that is.

French fiction, always more or less diseased and indecorous, has in recent years passed through several distinct phases of disease, and may now almost be said to have left simple indecorum far behind. Had it continued to exhibit merely its normal features of ordinary license and voluptuousness, there would have been little temptation to approach the subject, and every motive to avoid it. That phase of it has been often enough animadverted upon in English publications; no pleasure could be derived from its contemplation, and no new lessons could be drawn from its analysis. But since we first began to be acquainted with it, a change, or rather a succession of changes, has come over it, so strange, so repellent, and in some respects so appalling, that some instruction, at least in the way of warning, may be hoped

for from studying it in a right spirit; and it presents too marked and too extraordinary a psychological phenomenon to be ignored by any who desire to understand or penetrate the true aspect of their age. No such field was ever offered to the students of moral pathology before.

But in proceeding to treat of it, we are met on the threshold by an inherent and insuperable difficulty. Christian writers who endeavor to depict the moral renovation which the religion of their great Master wrought in the world, and to deduce thence proofs of its excellence and its divinity, complain that they labor under this disadvantage; that it is impossible for them to paint in true colors and to describe in plain language the horrible demoralization which Christianity cured and purged away, simply because no modern society would tolerate the delineation. They cannot give an adequate conception of the contrast, because they are compelled, out of very decency and mercy, to soften down the darker and more hideous features of the decaying times of Rome, Byzantium, or Alexandria. They cannot make us understand what Christianity *did*, because they dare not tell us nakedly what Paganism *was*. Something of the same embarrassments besets us in dealing with our present subject. We shall have to speak of French fiction without being able to show thoroughly what it is. We shall have to analyze its elements and its sources without being able adequately to exemplify or prove the correctness of our diagnosis by the most flagrant and conclusive specimens. We shall have to use the strongest language and to pronounce the most unmeasured condemnation, while we are precluded by the very nature of the case from justifying the sentence by adducing and detailing before our readers the most heinous of the offences which have called it forth.

There is yet another difficulty. The fact which forms the basis of nearly all the tales and romances on which we shall have to animadvert, is the habitual prevalence in France of those lawless loves, and, worse still, *liaisons* where no love is, which English fiction is forbidden to describe and almost to allude to. Of course, we are too well aware that such things are far from being unknown among ourselves, but at least they have no *recognized* existence; wisely or unwisely,

they are decently ignored both in general society and in literature designed for general reading; the novelist may not work them up as a part of his ordinary stock in trade; the critic, even if he have an æsthetic or an ethical aim in view, must speak of them only in veiled language and with much periphrasis. In England they are not regarded as legitimate materials for the excitement of interest or the development of character: if the writer of fiction use them at all, he is obliged to use them with the utmost reticence and moderation; whereas the French romancer never dreams of dispensing with them, and often relies on little else for the construction of his plot or the fascination of his tale. With us all such violations of the moral and the social law meet with the severest and most unqualified condemnation: long may it continue so, provided only the condemnation be sincere, consistent, and free from all taint of unholy or malignant pharisaism! Among our neighbors a far more lax and lenient view is taken of such transgressions; they are classed among the common and nearly unavoidable frailties of a nature never perfect and seldom strong; in ordinary life and ordinary fiction they call forth only gentle blame, faint regret, and no surprise. This being the case, we must to a certain extent accept, or at least recognize, the point of view of the writers and readers of the society of which we speak; that is to say, without for one moment admitting that their estimate of illicit passion is a just one, we must allow that it *is* the usual and accepted one among them, before we proceed to draw warning and instruction from observing to what lengths this fatal license has conducted the light literature of their country. We have only, as a preliminary, to clear our path by asking our readers to understand, once for all, that, as the normal prevalence of the errors, or vices, or frailties in question (however we may choose to designate them), is assumed by all the literature we are about to estimate, it must be assumed likewise by ourselves.

The inspiration of French fiction,—the source from which flow half its deformities, its vile morality and its vitiated taste, is the *craving for excitement* that has so long been characteristic of the nation. It is not difficult to see how this craving has been stimulated and nourished till it has grown into



a passion that will take no denial and knows no satiety. Two generations of ceaseless revolution, of dazzling conquests and bewildering defeats, of alternations of wild frenzy and prostrate depression, of vicissitudes as strange, as rapid, as extreme as any to be witnessed at the gaming-table, have goaded what was always a desire into an imperious necessity. The present race of Frenchmen, and their fathers even more, were born and bred amid scenes and deeds which made the battle of life a confused and desperate *mêlée*, the race of life a feverish scurry, the banquet of life a dish of mere spice, alcohol, and pepper. Glance back for a moment over the first magnificent convulsion of 1789. Call to mind all the stirring and disturbing thoughts of emancipation and of progress which the writers of that day had been diligently instilling into the popular brain, till half a century of new ideas acting on five centuries of old oppressions wrought a fermentation which found issue and utterance in such an overthrow of established notions and established things as the world had never witnessed since its birth. Grand and generous dreams of indefinite improvement; fierce and selfish longings for satisfying vengeance; the prospect of a new era; the fancy of a heaven realized on earth; that universal liberation from all bonds, and almost from all obedience, that sweeping disbelief or doubt as to every settled axiom of religion, of morals, and of law, which is so unhooking even to trained and philosophic minds, and which was then diffused over all the uneducated intelligence and turbulent sensibility of France; the sudden overthrow, nay the actual disappearance, in little more than a year of the aristocracy, the monarchy, the Church,—of all, in a word, that men had been accustomed to reverence or fear; the king and the noble cast down, the serf and the valet lifted up; the first last, and the last first. Amid excitements so tremendous as these, what simple or quiet tastes could grow up or survive? After stimulants like these, how could the relish for a pure milk-diet be recovered? Then followed reaction and disenchantment as extreme as the wild hopes which they replaced,—the guillotine, the prison massacres, the Reign of Terror; and to the excitement of passionate aspirations succeeded the more absorbing and degrading excitement of a deadly fear. No

one who has not studied that terrible period in detail can form an idea of the depth to which its influence penetrated into the national life. Simultaneously with this phase, but prolonged beyond it, came the marvelous victories of the half-clad, half-disciplined troops, poured forth to the frontiers by the Convention and the Directory; followed by the early and brilliant conquests of the young Napoleon, when every post brought tidings of some new achievement; and terminated by the *coup de main* which made him supreme ruler of an exhausted and admiring nation. For a while there was comparative quiet, as the work of reconstruction succeeded that of abolition. But, as if ten years of such convulsions had not sufficed to demoralize the nation, they were to be continued and crowned by fourteen years of another sort of feverish excitement, different, indeed, but almost more disturbing. In this point of view, as in most others, the reign of Napoleon was an irreparable mischief to his country. His triumphal march over Europe—so rapid, so resistless, and so sure, that every month seemed barren, dull, and idle that did not inaugurate a new victory and annex a new realm—made all sober careers stupid and monotonous. Years spent in feverish expectation and in frantic jubilee demoralize the rest of life. The Russian campaign, the European coalition, the desperate struggle of 1813, the abdication, the almost fabulous recovery, the final catastrophe of Waterloo and St. Helena, kept up and enhanced the mad excitement. Henceforward tame and ordinary existence became unendurable to Frenchmen, except during brief moments of absolute exhaustion; and the revolution of 1830, the republic of 1848, the terrible days of June, the *coup-d'état*, and the second empire, seemed natural and normal occurrences in such a history—the inevitable sequels of such a turbulent and stormy past.

Infancy, youth, and manhood spent among scenes like these leave indelible traces on a people's life. The whole soil of the national character is stamped and interpenetrated by the over-mastering influences; and it may be said, in a far nobler sense than that originally intended by the poet, that

"Where such fairies once have danced,  
No grass will ever grow."

The operation on literature is twofold: in

the first place, readers find any less stirring incidents or less violent emotions feeble, tame, and unexciting; and, in the second place, writers find in the familiar realities of their annals, in the thrilling crises and the terrible catastrophes from which the country has but just emerged, and in the thousand individual histories and adventures mixed up with them, a quarry of materials for romance with which, for richness and effectiveness, no mere fiction can compare, and which the most bold and fertile invention would find it difficult to match. The same circumstances enable the authors to supply without stint or measure what they have educated the audience imperiously to require. Accordingly, this teeming mine has been assiduously worked by the novelists of France; and the national craving for stimulants has thus been fed and fostered without being quenched or cured—for that sort of thirst is never slaked. The time came when even stories seasoned with all the quick convulsions and lurid horrors of the revolutions and the Reign of Terror began to pall. The demand remained. Something fresh and something stronger must be contrived to meet it. The unhealthy appetite—ravenous because unhealthy—became clamorous for more; like the voluptuous despot, it offered a reward for a new sensation, a new pleasure, a new dish; and, as in that case, since the genuine and the natural was exhausted, the monstrous and the impure must be resorted to.

The first mine worked was, as might be expected, the *licentious*. Voluptuous pictures of illicit love, in all its phases and in all its stages of progress, constantly approaching the limits of decency and often overstepping them, offered at once the most natural and the most vulgar source of excitement for the jaded appetite and the perverted taste. Every one could understand them; every one could take an interest in them. Descriptions of a sin—the sin being forbidden by good morals, and the description of it being forbidden by good society—presented all the attractions of a double lawlessness, in addition to their native charm. But these were so easy and became so common, the ordinary forms of them were so soon exhausted and so certainly and rapidly palied by repetition, and the boundaries of the permissible were so soon reached, that success could only be

achieved by something that was extraordinary and therefore bordered on the unnatural, by something that was unpermissible and therefore degenerated into the atrocious and revolting. Each writer had to surpass his predecessor,—to say something still more shocking, to conceive something still more shameful, to push daring a few steps further, to raise the drapery of delicacy and decorum a few inches higher, to uncover the nakedness of poor humanity a little more completely and a little more offensively. The consequences may easily be fancied; in a race of this sort there is no absolute goal, or rather the goal is perpetually receding; but the rival candidates run very fast and very far.

Nearly all the French novelists of the present generation have been habitually and flagrantly guilty in this respect; but perhaps the most distinctive example of this phase of mental and moral unhealthiness may be seen in the earlier tales of George Sand, who is the type, if not the chief, of sinners. No writer, so capable of painting the sentiment, has stained her pages so deeply with pictures of the appetite, of love. With a style which for poetry and beauty, and affluence in all the brightest coloring of nature, has had no equal since Rousseau, she has dedicated it to the production of scenes which Rousseau would have despised as an artist and shrunk from as a moralist. For a brief space she seemed about to emerge from the mire, and to be pruning and cleaning her wings for higher flights and for a purer air; and *Consuelo* and *La Petite Fadette* were the result of this excursion into good; but she has relapsed again, and *Indiana*, *Valentine*, and *Léone Léoni*, still remain as the most native productions of her genius, and the best specimens of the literary vice we are describing. Of course, we can give no quotations, nor should we have dwelt upon the subject at all except as the first step towards the frightful degree of disease which French fiction has now reached.

After a while, however, this species of stimulant began to pall, and a new spice was introduced. The melodramatic and the horrible was superadded to the voluptuous. But the *merely* horrible would have been trite and powerless. Murders, suicides, torture-chambers, and scaffolds, were exhausted and dried up as sources of excitement, unless

some fresh element could be infused, or some change rung upon the wearied chord. This was found in the *prolongation* of the horror,—in the indefinite tension of the strained nerve. Pain, terror, anguish, struggle,—commonplace and endurable when lasting only a few moments—began to *tell* when continued through whole pages, and spun out through frightful and breathless hours. The author in whose writings this peculiar type of excitement most frequently recurs is Victor Hugo. He has worked this mine through its every vein with unrelenting industry. In *Bug-Jargal* he gives us a scene wherein the hero, a captive and disarmed, is left at the edge of a fearful chasm with his mortal enemy, a deformed and malignant negro dwarf, who is preparing to slay him; but before doing so, reviles and taunts him through a whole chapter. After a rescue and relapse, they are again alone: the dwarf rushes upon his victim, D'Auverney, with a poniard; D'Auverney slips aside, and the dwarf falls into the abyss. To have ended matters here, however, would have been a waste of valuable materials. Accordingly, the author proceeds:—

"I told you that a root of the old tree projected from a crevice in the granite rock, just above the margin of the chasm. The dwarf encountered this in his fall; his tunic caught in the root, and seizing hold of this last support, he clung to it with extraordinary energy. His pointed cap fell off his head; he let go his poniard, which was lost in his depths of the abyss. Suspended thus over the horrible gulf, Habibrah made convulsive efforts to regain the platform; but his short arms were unable to reach the edge of the escarpment, and his nails were torn in his impotent exertions to lay hold on the slippery surface of the overhanging rock. He howled with rage.

"The least shake on my part would have sufficed to have precipitated him into the roaring chasm; but the idea of such a cowardly act never crossed my mind. This moderation seemed to strike him. I thanked Heaven for my unhopèd-for deliverance, and prepared to abandon him to the fate he so richly merited, when I heard his voice, wretched and imploring, calling to me from the gulf.

"Master, master!" he said, 'for pity's sake don't go! In the name of the good God, don't leave a guilty and impenitent wretch whom you can save to die this miserable death! Alas, my strength is failing,

the branch slips and yields under my hands; my weight is dragging me down; in an instant I shall lose my grasp, and the horrible abyss is raging beneath me. Have you no mercy on your poor dwarf? Wont you prove to him that white men are better than black, and masters more generous than slaves?'

"I was moved, and returned to the edge of the precipice: the dim light, as I looked down, showed me the hideous face of the negro, with an expression of entreaty which I had never seen there before.

"Senor Leopold,' he continued, encouraged by the pity which I could not altogether hide, 'is it possible that a man can see a fellow-creature in this frightful situation and not help him? Master! stretch me out a hand—so little will save me; and what is nothing to you is every thing to me. Drag me up, for pity's sake, and my gratitude shall be equal to my crimes.'

"Wretch!" I exclaimed, 'recall not the recollection of them I warn you.'

"If I do, it is only to detest them. Oh, be more generous than I was! O Heaven, I am failing! I am going! Give me your hand—your hand, in the name of the mother who bore you.'

"I cannot describe how lamentable and *déchirante* was this cry of terror and of suffering. I forgot all that had passed, and saw in him no longer an enemy, a traitor, an assassin, but only a wretch whom a slight exertion of mine could rescue from a dreadful death. He begged so piteously, and reproach would have been so idle! I bent down, and kneeling on the edge of the chasm, with one arm round the tree of which the root half sustained the miserable Habibrah, I stretched down to him the other. He seized it with prodigious strength in both of his; but, far from using it to endeavor to ascend, I felt that he was seeking to drag me with him into the gulf; and but for the support of the tree to which I was clinging, I should have been infallibly overpowered by the sudden and violent pull which the wretch gave me.

"Villain!" I exclaimed, 'what are you about?'

"I am avenging myself," he replied with an infernal burst of laughter. 'Imbecile animal! I have you fast; you have given yourself to me. I was lost; you were saved:—you have been ass enough to venture voluntarily into the jaws of the alligator, because it groaned after having roared. I am comforted now, since my death even is a vengeance. You have fallen into the snare, and now I shall have a human companion among the fishes of the lake.'

"'Traitor!' I answered, stretching myself back; 'is it thus you reward me for endeavoring to save your life?'"

"'Yes,' he answered; 'I know I might have saved myself by your aid, but I prefer that you should die with me. I like your death better than my life. Come!'"

"With this explanation his two hard bronzed hands fastened upon mine with a tremendous grasp; his eyes flared; his mouth foamed; his strength, whose loss a moment ago he had so piteously deplored, returned to him, augmented by the fury of vengeance: he set his feet like two levers against the side of the rock, and bounded about like a tiger on the root which still supported him, and which he endeavored to break, that his weight might more surely drag me down with him into the abyss, laughing all the time with the frantic laugh of a demoniac. One of my knees was fortunately fast in a crevice of the rock; my arm was in a manner fixed to the tree round which I clung; and I struggled against the efforts of the dwarf with all the despairing energy of self-preservation. From time to time, as I could collect breath, I called loudly on Bug-Jargal: but the noise of the waterfall left me little expectation of being heard.

"Meanwhile the dwarf, who had not anticipated so much resistance, redoubled his efforts, and wore me out with a series of furious tugs. I began to lose my strength; my arm was almost paralyzed with cramp. My sight began to fail; livid lights danced before my eyes; my ears tingled with strange sounds; I heard the root cracking before it finally gave way, and the monster laughing and howling immediately below me. In a last effort of despair I called 'Bug-Jargal!' once more, and was answered by the barking of a dog. I turned my eyes: Bug-Jargal and his faithful animal were at the entrance of the subterranean passage. He saw my danger at a glance. 'Hold for a moment more,' he cried. Habibrah, madened by my prospect of salvation, and foaming with rage, called out, 'Come! I say, come!' and collected for a last pull his preternatural vigor. My wearied arm lost its hold of the tree; one moment more and I was gone, when I was seized from behind by Rask. His timely aid saved me. Habibrah, exhausted by his final effort, let go my hand, the root on which he leaned broke beneath his weight; and as Rask drew me violently back, the wretched dwarf, screaming out a parting curse, fell back into the horrible abyss.

"This was the end of my uncle's jester."

A similar scene is depicted with even greater power in *Notre Dame de Paris*, the

*chef-d'œuvre* of Victor Hugo. A beautiful gypsy girl, Esmeralda,—loved reverentially by Quasimodo, a deformed, deaf, one-eyed dwarf, loved sensually by the priest of Notre Dame, whose attempts she had repulsed,—is being hung in the Place de la Grève, having been betrayed to death by the humiliated and vindictive priest. Quasimodo and the priest are kneeling on the highest balustrade of the tower of the cathedral, watching the dying convulsions of the wretched girl,—the one with agonized sympathy, the other with diabolical joy.

"At the moment when the struggles of the dying girl were the most horrible, a demoniacal laugh—a laugh such as a man cannot utter till he has put off humanity—burst forth on the livid countenance of the priest. Quasimodo could not hear the laugh, but he saw it. He stepped back a pace or two behind him, and then rushing furiously upon him, hurled the wretched archdeacon over the edge of the balustrade.

"The priest exclaimed, 'Damnation!'" and fell. The stone gutter, over which he had been kneeling, arrested him in his fall. He clung to it with a despairing grasp, and was about to utter a second cry, when he looked up and saw above him the vengeful face of Quasimodo. Then he became silent.

"The abyss was below him—a fall of two hundred feet, and then the pavement. In this horrible position, the archdeacon spoke not a word, uttered not a groan. He only twisted himself on the gutter in frantic efforts to climb up again; but his hands had no hold on the smooth granite, and his feet only scraped the wall without helping him. Those who have mounted the towers of Notre Dame may remember a stone projection immediately under the balustrade. It was on this projection that the miserable priest exhausted all his strength in endeavoring to gain a footing, but in vain.

"Quasimodo might have rescued him from his impending fate by simply stretching out his hand; but he did not even look at him. He saw nothing but the Place de la Grève, the gibbet, and the gypsy girl. He leaned against the precise stone of the balustrade where the priest had kneeled a moment before; and there gazing mute and motionless on the only object the world contained for him, he stood like a man struck by lightning, while tears flowed silently and fast from his single eye.

"The archdeacon panted for breath. His bald forehead streamed with perspiration; his nails were torn by the stone; his knees were excoriated by the rough wall. He heard his surplice, which had caught upon the



gutter, crack and tear at each fresh struggle. To complete the horror of his situation, the gutter ended in a leaden pipe, which already began to bend under his weight. The archdeacon felt it slowly sinking under him. The miserable man said to himself that, when his hands should be paralyzed with fatigue, when his surplice should be quite torn, when the lead should have altogether given way, he *must* fall, and indescribable terror seized upon his soul. From time to time he looked down upon a small platform about ten feet below him, formed by some broken stones and sculptured figures, and besought Heaven in his agony to let him pass his whole life on this space of two feet square, rather than die this fearful death. Once he looked down on to the pavement of the *Place*, far, far beneath; and when he raised his head his hair was standing on end with horror.

"The silence of these two men was something terrible. While the priest was struggling in this fearful fashion, a few feet above him Quasimodo gazed at the scaffold and wept.

"The archdeacon at last, seeing that all his struggles only served to shake the frail support to which he clung, lay perfectly still. He was there, holding by the gutter, scarcely breathing, never moving, giving no other sign of life than the convulsive twitchings of the dreamer who dreams that he is falling. His eyes were wide open, fixed, and seemed starting out of his head. Little by little he lost ground, his fingers slipped along the gutter, the lead gradually bent further and further, and he became increasingly conscious of the weight of his body and the weakness of his arms. He looked one by one at the impassive figures sculptured on the tower, like him suspended over the abyss, but without pity for him or terror for themselves. Every thing was stone around; before his eyes grotesque and monstrous heads, far below him at the bottom the pavement of the square, just above him Quasimodo weeping.

"In the *Place* below were groups of curious observers, who were quietly watching the struggles of the priest, and trying to guess who was the madman that amused himself with such strange and perilous antics. The priest heard their comments as their faint clear voices reached him in the still air, saying, 'But he will break his neck.'

"Quasimodo wept.

"At last the wretched man, foaming with rage and terror, perceived that all was of no avail. He collected all his remaining strength for one despairing effort. He stiffened his limbs upon the gutter, pushed

against the wall frantically with his knees, fastened his hand to a cleft in the stone, and succeeded in raising himself a few inches. But the commotion caused a sudden bend in the leaden pipe, his surplice was rent in twain, and feeling every thing give way beneath him, he shut his eyes, let go his hold, and fell.

"Quasimodo watched him falling. A fall from such a height is seldom perpendicular. The archdeacon launched into the air, fell at first with head downward and arms extended, then he turned round twice or thrice and fell on the roof of a building, where he was partially crushed and broken. But he was not dead when he struck; Quasimodo saw him endeavor to cling to the tiles, but the incline was too steep, and he had no strength left. He slipped down the roof, and fell with a rebound upon the pavement, where he moved no more.

"Quasimodo then raised his eye to look once more upon the girl, whose limbs hanging from the gibbet he could see still quivering under her white dress in the last agonies of death; then he looked down on the archdeacon stretched at the foot of the tower, crushed out of the very semblance of humanity, and exclaimed with a sob which shook his whole frame, 'Alas, all I ever loved!'"

But perhaps the greatest achievement in this line is to be found in *Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné*, by the same author. This is a whole volume supposed to be written by a convict the day before his execution, describing in the minutest detail the sensations, anticipations, reflections, terrors, and agonies of each successive hour as it brings him nearer to his doom. For a *shocking* display of perverted genius and power we know nothing like it; but quotations are, of course, impossible. There is something revolting as well as preposterous in the conception of a man on the eve of a violent and certain death thus watching, anatomizing, and recording his own awful emotions.

Nearly every observer has been struck with the hold which the desire and the pursuit of wealth and material prosperity seem to have taken of the French nation. Formerly other passions predominated over the thirst for riches. Glory, honor, enterprise, intellectual distinction, were more than gold. The man who sought to be wealthy, and who became so, used to be held in low esteem in comparison with him who sought to be great or famous, and attained his end. Now all

this is changed. The taste for luxury has become a passion. The millionaire has become the national idol. The avaricious appetite seems to have taken possession of the whole people. Dreams of unexpected, sudden, fabulous wealth appear to be universally indulged in. Many causes have contributed to this. Revolutions, rapid and incalculable turns of the wheel of political fortune, have left scarcely any power stable and enduring except that of money. Millions gained in a few months by contractors, stock-jobbers, and railway speculators have gone far to demoralize the nation. Every one sees that the men who have thus vaulted into affluence are not specially clever or specially industrious; and every one fancies there is no reason why he may not do as well as they. Then the prevalent irreligion of most classes except the poor, has taught all to look for their paradise on earth, and to frame it out of the most earthly elements,—out of luxury, which wealth could furnish,—out of love, such as wealth could also buy. Those who could not revel in the wealth itself, could at least revel in the description of it. Those who failed of the reality could find some compensation, some delusive enjoyment, in the vivid picture and the transient dream. Thus arose the demand for romances of which the central figure is some hero possessed of countless and inexhaustible millions, and of which every page gives evidence of an invention and imagination actually on the rack to produce conceptions of the most *recherché* and unheard-of luxury. The writers were as eager to supply as the public to demand this gorgeous, intoxicating, and unwholesome pabulum. For their passion for gold, and all that gold can purchase, had been goaded and inflamed almost into frenzy by their peculiar position. Usually poor, yet in virtue of their education in close contact daily with the rich; living a life of toil and privation, yet in virtue of their brevet rank as men of talent, enjoying, on a footing of nominal equality, the hospitality of the luxurious millionaire; surrounded with every species of appetizing pleasure, which they see others plunged in and gloating over, but which they are too penniless to share; spending their evenings in brilliant theatres or magnificent saloons, amid every kind of beauty and indulgence that can delight or irritate the senses, and retiring from

all this at night to their squalid garret, their homeless hearth, and their empty soul,—who can wonder that their fancy should run riot in meretricious pictures of material splendors and material joys? and when once embarked in this career, millions are as easy to create as thousands, and far more exciting. Here we have the original of that class of French novels of which *Monte-Christo* is type and crown—a work which has driven thousands half wild with envy and impotent desire.

The plot of *Monte-Christo* is as follows: A meritorious young sailor, captain of a merchant-vessel belonging to Marseilles, is denounced as a Buonapartist agent by two enemies, one of whom desires his post and the other covets his mistress. He is arrested on his marriage-day and imprisoned in the Château d'If, an island off the south coast of France. Here he remains for fourteen years, in the course of which he manages, by means of a subterranean passage which he excavates, to establish a communication with an old and very learned Italian abbé, who teaches him much science and many languages, and ends with disclosing to him the secret of a vast treasure which he believes to be hidden in the island of Monte-Christo, a desert rock near the Tuscan shore. The abbé dies, and the young sailor conceals himself in his shroud, and contrives to be thrown into the sea instead of his deceased friend. He cuts open the shroud; escapes by swimming; goes to Monte-Christo; discovers and disinters the treasure (which consists of countless millions in gold and precious jewels); and after a few years reappears in the world as Count of Monte-Christo and the possessor of fabulous wealth, to commence his work of rewarding his friends and punishing his enemies,—both of which purposes he carries out by means of the most complicated plots, mysterious appearances, and melodramatic *coups de théâtre*, in the worst taste and of the most extravagant conception. Wherever he appears, he lives in the most astounding and elaborate luxury, and behaves with the most ostentatious generosity; but the generosity rather of a *parvenu* than a prince. His mansions are furnished with unimaginable splendor; his yacht is a miracle of gorgeous and elegant contrivances; he presents wonderful diamonds to wretched innkeepers who have served



him, and bestows unrivalled emeralds on the sultan and the pope to purchase the freedom of a beautiful Greek and the life of a Roman bandit. He is served by black and silent servants; wherever he goes unexpected allies and *protégés* start up beneath his feet to do his bidding; he is in secret communication with all the potentates of the earth; he makes appointments to the minute months beforehand and thousands of miles distant, keeps them at the last stroke of the clock, and apologizes for being two seconds late. In short, the whole story reads like the *Arabian Nights* adapted to Paris life in the reign of Louis Philippe. The taste of the whole is shocking; but it cannot be denied that the pictures are gorgeous, and thoroughly oriental both in their magnificence and their monstrosity: nor can we wonder that the work attained an extraordinary popularity among a people thirsting for material luxury and enjoyment—"the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."

The next morbid phase into which the insatiable passion for excitement plunged the novelists of France is that of which the works of Eugène Sue, especially *Atar-Gul* and *Les Mystères de Paris*, offer the most perfect type. It may be called "the criminal-monstrosity phase," or the phase of moral horrors and abominations. Its peculiar feature is a combination of the morally detestable with the psychologically impossible. The imagination is strained, spurred, and as it were stimulated by intoxicating drinks, to conceive every variety and abyss of crime; to paint the worst dens of infamy and sanguinary brutality which the cellars and catacombs of Paris can supply, to depict the daily life and the habitual sentiments, desires, and language of the hideous wretches who inhabit them; and then to place in the midst of these obscene haunts and these abandoned desperadoes some maiden of angelic loveliness and purity, who walks unharmed among the squalid and ruffianly vice around her. Where the story does not lend itself to this unnatural conception, the needed contrast is found in some other fashion. *Atar-Gul* is the story of a domestic negro in one of the West-Indian colonies of France, who is possessed through life by the most diabolic spirit of cruelty and revenge; who, having his master's full confidence and regard, continues to be considered by every

one as a perfect specimen and treasure of devotion and gratitude, yet pursues for years a deliberate plan for the destruction of his master's family and the infliction of every species of suffering he can devise; and finally, when his master is paralytic and unable either to defend himself or denounce his enemy, tortures his last hours by explaining to him the various schemes by which he had made his life miserable, and gloats over the impotent horror and indignation of the man who had so long loved and trusted him, and whom at last he thus barbarously undeceives. The *finale* and crowning stroke of the conception is the awarding to this finished and utterly unredeemed ruffian of the Monthyon prize for pre-eminent virtue, by men who had witnessed his apparent devotion, but were unacquainted with the true secret.

*Atar-Gul* was, we believe, the first production of Eugène Sue; *Les Mystères de Paris*, which followed it some years later, was every way worthy of so unhealthy a *début*. This work enjoyed for a considerable period almost unexampled popularity and circulation. That it should have done so appears to us in the highest degree discreditable to the critical as well as to the moral taste of the French; for any thing more confused and unartistic than the narrative, any thing more unnatural and unreal than the characters (with one or two exceptions), it is impossible to conceive. Nearly all the *dramatis personæ* are criminals of the lowest order and the most desperate and depraved natures. Nearly all the more striking and labored scenes are laid in those secluded or subterranean haunts of squalid misery and loathsome sin with which a great city like Paris is sure to swarm. Every atrocious crime, from gigantic swindling to hired murder, which lawless fancy could invent or lawless men could perpetrate, is here delineated in the most revolting detail. The actors are brought upon the stage only to commit these crimes. The men, the women, even the children, are rather born devils than fallen and abandoned human beings. The author seems to have resolved that no one should be able to surpass him, or to find it worth while to follow him in this line. He has exhausted the field. We verily believe he has left nothing to be gathered by any gleaner. In the midst of all these lurid horrors two characters are introduced by

way of relief and contrast. One is a young sovereign prince, grand-duke of Gerolstein, gifted with vast wealth, irresistible fascination, and fabulous physical strength, who goes about in various disguises, as he expresses it, "playing at Providence," relieving misery, righting wrongs, and punishing crime. In his judgments and inflections, it might strike an ordinary reader that he is scarcely more scrupulous, natural, or decent than the criminals whom he detects and crushes. He puts out the eyes of one hardened murderer, by way of rendering his punishment appropriate and lingering. He lets loose one woman of preternatural fascinations and preternatural profligacy (every thing in the book is preternatural, superlative, and fabulous) on a notary whose crimes he desires to drag to light, with orders (which are executed to the letter and described as minutely as in a *procès verbal*) to drive him into frenzy by perpetually provoking his sensual desires and never gratifying them. Yet this prince is the virtuous man of the book. The female miracle of it is Fleur de Marie, a young maiden, the lost daughter of wealthy and noble parents,—of the above-mentioned grand-duke and his mistress, in fact, but whom Rodolph believed to be dead,—who is brought up amid murderers, prostitutes, and thieves of the very lowest and filthiest description; but who has retained through all surroundings her innate purity of soul, exquisite delicacy of sentiment, and rich warmth of heart. She is beautifully painted, but, as we have said, she is a psychological impossibility. Such was the romance which for a while dominated Paris, and contributed not a little to the election of the author to the national assembly ten years ago, by an overwhelming and nearly unexampled majority of votes, as the representative of the socialist party.

The unenviable success of opening an entirely new vein in this mine of intellectual pathology has been achieved by Alexander Dumas the younger—the son of the most prolific and extravagant romance-writer of this, or perhaps of any day. *Monte-Christo* is the typical production of the father; *La Dame aux Camélias*, the typical production of the son. The *spécialité* of M. Dumas, *fils* (as he is usually termed),—the particular field which he has selected,—is the delineation of the *demi-monde*, or courtesan life. In

France this world crosses the other more legitimate world so frequently, the two societies run so parallel and so often touch and even intermingle, that pictures of the one have almost always involved allusions to, and occasional excursions within the limits of, the other. Episodes and complications connected with the *demi-monde* are therefore to be met with in many recent Parisian novels; but M. Dumas, *fils*, is the first writer who has deliberately, consistently, and as it were almost professionally, laid his scenes in this anomalous world, and chosen his characters from among the people who inhabit it and frequent it. *La Dame aux Camélias*, and *Le Demi-Monde* (which is a drama, and had an enormous success when brought out on the stage), are devoted to the description of courtesan life; and *Le Roman d'une Femme* is a narrative in which the two societies—the recognized and the unrecognized—are placed side by side, with all their clashing engagements and incongruous affections and inextricable links—with their painful contrasts and still more painful resemblances. It is impossible to deny that M. Dumas, *fils*, is a master of his craft. Not only is he thoroughly at home in the society which he depicts, not only does he know to its very core and in all its recesses the social and (so to speak) the inner life of its denizens, both male and female; but he handles his materials as an artist, a philosopher, and almost as a moralist—if that epithet can fairly be applied to a man too familiar with all forms of profligacy to shrink from any, to whom voluptuous indulgence is one of the ordinary phenomena of life, and who does not even profess to have any sentiments of right or wrong concerning it. He is a conscientious and consummate workman; he makes a really profound study of his subject; he prepares his canvas with scientific care; his drawing is always distinct; his coloring, always vivid, is never outrageous; his figures, such as they are, are in harmony with themselves and in keeping with each other; he never condescends to the monstrous, and scarcely ever to the loathsome. Compared with his father, he is a model of high art; compared with Eugène Sue, he is almost a classic; compared with Ernest Feydeau, he may be regarded as decent and almost pure. It is true he has expressly selected scenes and characters which it is usual to ignore, or to

notice at a distance, or to look at and pass to the other side ; it is true that he describes them with a plainness of language and fullness of detail hitherto unexampled in works intended to take rank as literature, to be read avowedly, and to lie on the tables of decent drawing-rooms ; it is true there is something startling and almost stunning in the unapologetic and as it were physiological coolness of his analysis. But he writes rather like a man to whom reticence is unknown than to whom license is attractive. He has, indeed, no scruples of modesty to restrain him for saying any thing which it lies in his way to say ; but, on the other hand, he has not, like so many of his countrymen, a disordered prurience perpetually goading him to go out of his way to find precisely the thing which he ought not to say. In fact, though about the most *lawless* of French novelists, yet, compared with most of them, he may almost be deemed estimable ; and if it be permissible at all—which it is hard to grant—to paint in detail a life of which frailty, sin, and often abandoned viciousness, constitute the atmosphere and action then there is little to quarrel with either in the science or the talent of the painter.\*

If we could venture to separate the *tendency* of a work from its features and its character, or to set off the lessons it is fitted to convey to thoughtful minds against the tone of its sentiments and the probable influence of its pictures upon ordinary readers, we should be more than half disposed to class M. Dumas' novels among *moral* fictions. There pervades them all a conviction, as profound as that of Solomon and based upon a similar experience, of the utter worthlessness of sensual enjoyments, of the hollowness of a life of pleasure, of the disappointment and satiety of those who lead it, of the mockery of all vicious hopes, of the delusive nature of all casual and wandering affections. The most boundless appliances of luxury, the most complete and intoxicating of illicit successes, are "the apples on the Dead-Sea shore." The better

the instincts and the nobler the capacities of the votary of pleasure, the more certain and the more bitter is sure to be his disenchantment. The endeavor to import into the life of the *demi-monde* any real sentiment or any genuine affection, is persistently and convincingly represented as inevitably hopeless and fatal. The actors in his sad dramas of passion and of sin are always punished and always wretched. They pay for hours of frenzied and forbidden joys by years of fearful expiation. The utterly heartless and selfish are always shown to be the only ones tolerably happy ; and these are never made the attractive or the fascinating personages of the story. This is cynical morality, no doubt, but it is morality which will produce its effect notwithstanding ; and all the more so upon the class to whom it is addressed, as springing out of reaction and experience, and not out of principle, and as coming from a man in whom the moral sense, as we understand it, seems to have no existence. In the *Dame aux Camélias*, the heroine, a courtesan awakened to purity and aspiration by a real passion, ends a life consisting of scenes of the most poignant and ever-recurring anguish, varied only with days of transient and precarious rapture, by a death of lingering and tortured desolation ; while her lover is, and deserves to be, almost more wretched than herself. In the *Roman d'une Femme*, an exquisite and chaste young wife, whose thread of life, owing to a casual frailty of her husband, becomes entangled with that of a clever and merciless *lorette*, dies broken-hearted at the age of twenty-two, having destroyed husband, father, child, and friend, by the fault of one nearly unconscious hour. With M. Dumas, retribution is abundantly and *logically* dealt out to all the frail and guilty. Vice is never made happy, except it is so abandoned and so gross as to lose all its fascinations, and to become repellent and not dangerous.

From these tales—and from another which in some features may be classed with them, and which has recently earned an infamous celebrity\*—we gather two or three features

\* From this appreciative admission—which in its context here is almost praise—we must make, however, one weighty exception. *Antoine*, the last work of M. Dumas, in the cold cynicism of its conclusion, and still more in its shameless unveiling of some of the most perverse and revolting vagaries of unhallowed passion, seems to us the saddest illustration and measure of French demoralization yet given to the world.

\* *Fanny*, by Ernest Feydeau. It is scarcely fair, however, to rank this disreputable volume, the success of which is in itself a scandal, with the artistic performances of M. Dumas, *filia*. It is a mere picture—drawn with a certain power and richness of coloring no doubt—of irrational and ungoverned passion ; and is stained by indelicacies more monstrous in imagination and more daring in

of Parisian social life which throw much light on the subject we are discussing. One is particularly noticeable. Their heroes have nothing else to do in life but to make love. They have no business, no profession, no occupation. Many of them are men of fortune, who can afford to be idle, and to waste wealth in the pursuit of pleasure. But this is by no means universally or necessarily the case. Those who have only a scanty income—*seulement de quoi vivre*, as they express it—seem to lead pretty much the same sort of life, as long as their means last, and sometimes long after they are ruined. When this point is reached, they game, contract debts, marry an heiress, or blow out their brains. In England the great majority of young men of education have something regular to do—an employment at least, if not a profession. If they are born to a fortune, they have usually political duties or occupation connected with the management of their estates, or they travel, or enter the army. If they are poor, they embrace commerce or the civil service, or some one or other of the laborious callings that lead to wealth. If they have only a moderate income, they almost always eke it out by entering on some profession that is respectable, if not very lucrative. It is exceptional, and is not considered creditable, for a young man to be without some recognized and regular occupation or vocation. In France, on the contrary, what is here the exception appears to be the rule. The result is twofold, judging at least by the descriptions of society which we are now considering. In the first place, these men, being utterly *désœuvrés*, without any other call upon their time, give themselves up wholly to the contrivance and the enjoyments of intrigue. When in love, they throw themselves unreservedly into the pastime; their whole thoughts and their entire hours are absorbed in it; they do nothing else morning, noon, and night; it is not to them an episode, a reward, or a refreshment—it is their daily bread, their business, their calling, their labor, their life. The lover does not go to his mistress in his leisure moments, in his hours of relaxation, in his holidays, in his evenings, “after office-

expression than are to be found in any other specimen of this sort of literature that has fallen under our notice. Its excess of license, rather than any notable ability, we believe, caused its sudden popularity.

hours:” he lies at her feet all day and every day; he adulates, contemplates, and caresses her from Monday morning till Saturday night.\* He is described as plunged in a sort of sea of delirious and delusive intoxication, coming to the surface only every now and then to breathe. The result, of course, inevitably is both that—thinking of nothing else—passion is pampered into an excess and perverted into fancies which together become almost insanity; and that—doing nothing else—sentiment dies out from sheer weariness and reaction, and becomes quenched in sickening satiety. The *liaison*, even when comparatively pure and noble, having no relief or variety while it lasts, cannot in the nature of things last long. In the second place,—and this is a consequence shared in a qualified degree by all great cities where the rich and idle congregate,—the number of these idle men who have to kill time in seeking pleasure goes far to explain the laxity of morals and frailty of reputations believed to prevail among the *femmes du monde* in France. It is a social country; people live much in public, and much in company. A far larger portion of the time both of men and women is passed in making and receiving visits than with us. The number of people available for this occupation is unusually great. So many men have nothing to do but to pay court to women, and no scruples to prevent them from paying it in any mode and under any circumstances, that, in certain classes of society, women may be said to pass a considerable portion of their lives in a state of siege; they are perpetually surrounded by courtiers and “pretenders;” and as, alas! they are nearly as unoccupied as their adulators, and often quite as *ennuyées*, what wonder that so many

\* “J’allais chez elle à l’heure de déjeuner; n’ayant rien à faire de la journée, je ne sortais qu’avec elle. Elle me retenait à dîner, la soirée s’ensuivait par conséquent; bientôt, lorsque l’heure de rentrer arrivait, nous imaginâmes mille prétextes, nous primes mille précautions illusoires qui, au fond, n’en étaient point. Enfin je vivais, pour ainsi dire, chez elle.” *Confessions d’un Enfant du Siècle*, par Alfred de Musset.

See also *Dame aux Camélias* and *Antonine*, passim.

“Mon existence était sédentaire. Je passais la journée chez ma maîtresse: mon plus grand plaisir était de l’emmener à la campagne durant les beaux jours d’été, et de me coucher près d’elle dans les bois, sur l’herbe, ou sur la mousse. . . . En hiver, comme elle aimait le monde, nous courions les bals et les masques, en sorte que cette vie oisive ne cessait jamais.”—*Ibid.*

fall under the combined influence of temptation, tedium, and bad example !

Again : nothing makes a stronger or more painful impression on the reader than the unfeeling brutality with which the lovers in these tales habitually treat their mistresses, even when these mistresses are ladies of high position, superior education, and unblemished reputation. If any one is disposed to think lightly and leniently of those habits of license and intrigue which seem so general in France, and which are far from unknown here, he will do well to ponder this peculiar phase of character, as depicted in the literature in question by those who know it well and share it so thoroughly that they have almost ceased to excuse it or to be conscious of it. In the novels of George Sand, of Dumas, *filz*, of Earnest Foydeau, and of Alfred de Musset, the heroines are ladies endowed with every amiable and attractive quality, except that rigid principle which is scarcely to be looked for in such society ; fascinating, affectionate, full of heart and soul : capable not only of earnest and disinterested but of devoted and self-sacrificing attachment, and lavishing all the priceless treasures of a rich and noble nature on their unworthy suitors ; risking if not actually losing for them peace, fame, a calm conscience, and a happy home ; giving themselves up with a completeness and confidence of surrender which would be lovely and almost sublime, if only the cause were lawful and the object worthy ; trusting, soothing, aiding, enduring, worshipping, with a truth and fervor in which woman so rarely fails, and which man so rarely merits. But the men of the story—the objects and inheritors of all this affection—are represented—almost invariably, and as if it were the rule of life from which truth and notoriety permit the artist no departure—as becoming at once, not indeed insensible to, but utterly ungrateful for the wealth of love lavished upon them ; repaying devotion with insult, and abandonment with *exigence* ; answering every fresh proof of fidelity and self-surrender with groundless jealousies and mean suspicions ; meeting every concession with some new outrage or some new demand ; treating the most faithful, tender, and noble-minded mistresses, the moment they have them in their power, as no *gentleman* could treat even the poorest *jille perdue* who still retained a wo-

man's decency and a woman's form ;—in a word, displaying in every word and action a heartless egotism, a harsh and cruel tyranny and a total want of respect and consideration for the most natural as for the most sacred feelings, which would seem incredible on any less authority than their own. For it is remarkable that the novels which most detail all these cruel and selfish inflictions—which specify the worst brutalities inflicted by these lovers upon fond and tender women—are all *in the autobiographical form* ;—it is the barbarian who describes his own barbarities—the executioner who records all the slow elaborate tortures he has practised on his victim,—sometimes, indeed, with a sort of conventional self-condemnation, though scarcely ever with self-loathing or self-surprise—never with any indication of that burning shame which would make the record of such things impossible, even were the commission of them not so.

It will be obvious that the worst exemplifications of this hideous feature cannot stain our pages. It is not easy even to adduce any. They are so numberless and so perpetually recurring, that to quote them would be often to give the whole narration. *La Dame aux Camélias* is full of them,—consists of them,—some of a character and enormity which are scarcely conceivable,—yet all narrated by the offender himself. The same may be said of *Fanny*. The same may be said of *Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle*. The same may be said of *Elle et Lui*. In fact, they are all stories of a lover torturing his devoted and sensitive mistress to death by a series of ingenious insults, outrageous suspicions, cruel and exacting caprices, refined brutality, and a sort of cold, superlative selfishness for which a fitting epithet really is not to be found. After describing a number of these brutalities, some of them almost incredible, the *Enfant du Siècle* sums up thus : “ Lecteur, cela dura six mois : pendant six mois entiers, Brigitte, calomniée, exposé aux insultes du monde, eut à essuyer de ma part tous les dédains et toutes les injures qu'un libertin colère et cruel peut prodiguer à la fille qu'il paye.” \*

\* *Fanny* is from first to last the history, by himself, of a lover who maltreats and torments his mistress in every mode except actual personal violence,—by sarcasms, by insults, by suspicions, by cruel outrages upon every sentiment of duty, honor, and natural affection which she is endeavor-



Another characteristic, and, as far as we know, unique feature of these novels is the repeated pictures they present to us, not only of absolutely uncontrolled passions and emotions, and of indulging in them without reticence or shame, but of the entire absence apparently of any consciousness that such abandonment of all self-restraint is in any way disgraceful and unmanly. The heroes go into the most outrageous furies; they roll on the ground in agonies of tears; they pass from the wildest excesses of love into the wildest excesses of hatred; they become speechless with rage; they gesticulate like madmen; they give vent to all the unseemly violences of the half-childish, half-savage human animal, without dignity, decency, or drapery. It is not so much that they lose all self-control, as that they give no intimation that self-control is considered needful, or the want of it shameful. Extremes to which no provocation could goad an Englishman seem to be simple, every-day occurrences, among these spoiled children of license and intrigue. "The first thing I did [says one], as soon as I was able to rise after my wound, was to run to my mistress' house. I found her alone, sitting in the corner of her room, her countenance fallen and disturbed. I loaded her with the most violent reproaches; I was drunk with despair. *I cried out till the whole house echoed with the clamor; and at the same time my tears so interrupted my words that I FELL ON THE BED to let them flow freely.*" He ends by striking his mistress on the back of the neck; and when, in spite of all this treatment, she comes to him the same even-

ing to retain. Yet most of the outrages are of such a character that we have searched in vain for any passage that it would be possible to extract. We can only convey the most faint and general conception of the narrative by saying, that the lover begins by being furious because his mistress stays by the bedside of her sick child, instead of visiting him as usual; that he then falls so low as to regale her ears with every false and scandalous rumor that he can collect regarding her husband, whom, though she has betrayed him, she still esteems and values; that he abuses her because she defends this husband against his calumnies; and finally that, to punish the unhappy lady for refusing to fly with him, and abandon reputation, husband, and children at once, he, out of mere horrible perversity and *spite*, plunges into every sort of low debauchery; and returns to her, day after day, soiled and reeking from the haunts of infamy in which he has been endeavoring, as it were, to revenge himself upon her! And all this he relates himself!

ing to beg forgiveness and reconciliation, he takes a carving-knife, and threatens to kill her. The same man, a year or two later, finds another lady to love him, to whom he behaves much in the same way,—“treating her [he says] now as an abandoned woman, and the next instant as a divinity. A quarter of an hour after insulting her, I was kneeling at her feet; as soon as I ceased to accuse, I began to apologize; when I could no longer rail at her, I wept over her. A monstrous delirium, a rapturous fever, seized upon me; I nearly lost my senses in the violence of my transports; I did not know what to say, or to do, or to imagine, to repair the evil I had wrought. I spoke of blowing out my brains if I ever ill-treated her again. *These alternations of passion often lasted whole nights.*” \* The following is the reception given to a lady who comes to visit her lover (whom she had wronged, certainly) as he recovers from a severe illness:—

“Elle se pencha sur mon lit, et des deux mains souleva son voile. . . . ‘Fanny!’ m’écriai-je tout-à-coup, en levant les deux bras. Elle s’affaissa en sanglotant sur ma poitrine. Mais la mémoire m’étais revenue avec la connaissance, et la *frappant au front de mes poings fer mës*, je la detachai de moi en m’écriant comme un furieux: ‘Va-t’en d’ici!’ Elle crut que j’étais fou encore, et se détourna en pleurant; mais retrouvant un reste de force dans ma colère, je la *frappais encore à l’épaule*, et m’élançant de mon lit, je m’abattais sur elle, et roulai à terre à ses pieds.” †

One quotation more, and we have done. This novel ends with another scene, similar, but yet more atrocious. After heaping every sort of verbal outrage and abuse on the unhappy woman who had given herself to him, for six or seven pages of fluent insult, the narrator of his own shame proceeds:—

“Elle se leva enfin désespérée, et voulut

\* *Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle.* These are not, as might be imagined, specimens taken from the poor productions of some hack caterer for the lowest class of readers. They are extracts from a work of unusual power, of profound melancholy, and sadly and almost soundly moral in the lesson it inculcates. It contains the truest, most painful, and most warning pictures we have ever met with of the certainty and the terrible degree in which a career of profligacy, however brief and ungenial, poisons all legitimate enjoyment and all purer and serenest love.

† *Fanny*, par Ernest Feydeau.



partir. Mais je la retins, la poussai au fond de la chambre, et m'adossant contre la porte, les bras croisés : 'Tu entendras tout !' m'écriai-je. E alors *je me mis à haleter* ; et ne trouvant plus rien à lui dire, *je la menaçai des poings, en trépanant et en criant* ; et elle me regardait de côté avec un indicible terreur. Enfin les paroles, une fois de plus, jaillirent de ma bouche : 'Jamais je n'ai cru en toi. Je sentais si bien que tu me trompais, qu'à mon tour—malheureux que je suis !—j'ai voulu souiller notre amour. Apprends-le donc, si tu ne t'en es pas doutée ; moi qui t'adorais, je t'ai trompée avec les plus viles des femmes.'

Conceive an English gentleman in such a passion with the faithless lady whom he loved that his fury cannot find utterance, setting his back against the door, panting with rage, stamping and shaking his fists at her like a dumb idiot ; and at last, when words come to his relief, using his recovered speech to overwhelm her with *noirceurs* which could never enter the thoughts or pass the lips of any but the shameless and the abandoned ! And conceive further, his describing all these himself, without the slightest indication of reticence or humiliation !

It might seem impossible to go beyond or below this ; yet if there be a lower depth still, that depth has been reached in two of the last novels that have issued from the press, written by two of the most noted writers of the day. *Elle et Lui* and *Lui et Elle* bear the names respectively of George Sand and Paul de Musset. They are said to be, and we believe they are, the personal scandalous adventures of the writers, with some coloring, but with little deviation from historic fact, wrought into fiction. *Elle et Lui* describes the connection of Madame Dudevant (under her *nom de plume* of George Sand) with Alfred de Musset, from the lady's point of view, and paints scenes and characters as she would wish them to be believed by the world. Even on her own showing, the story is shocking and revolting enough ; but she paints herself as the loving, clinging, much-enduring, if yielding and guilty, woman ; and her lover as cruel, exacting, capricious, and incurably licentious. This lover, so delineated,—whom every one recognized as Alfred de Musset, a poet and novelist of great merit—is dead ; and Paul de Musset, not choosing that such a false

picture of his brother should go forth uncontradicted, and having materials and documents at his command, thought fit to give, also in the form of fiction, Alfred's version of the *liaison*. Here, as might be expected, the colors are reversed : the gentleman is described as all that is amiable, attractive, faithful, and devoted ; while the lady acts throughout as a thoroughly heartless and abandoned creature, though full of fascination, and not incapable for a time of experiencing an absorbing passion. Which of the parties speaks the truth and which lies, or in what proportion the indisputable falsehood is to be divided between them, it is needless to inquire. But assuredly nothing can be more disgraceful than the things revealed—except the revelation of them.

From the popularity, the general agreement, the consentaneous tone, both as to character and plot, of the works we have been considering, as well as from the absence of all exposing and protesting criticism, and from much corroborative information that has reached us, we are driven irresistibly to the following painful conclusions. That illicit *liaisons*, especially with married women, are, in the upper and the idler classes of France, the rule rather than the exception, and that the exceptions are rare and remarkable : among the *bourgeoisie*, we believe, the case is different,—they are too busy for a life of dissipation and intrigue. That, in the vast majority of instances, these *liaisons* have their origin—not, as among the Italians, in genuine and absorbing passion, nor, as among the Germans, in blended sentimentality and sense, but—in vanity, want of occupation, and love of excitement on the part of the men, and in love of admiration, and (what is worse) mere love of luxury, on the part of the women,—whose suitors furnish those means of extravagance which their husbands refuse ;—and that this distinction is to be traced to the peculiar character and temperament of the nation. That into these *liaisons* the men appear habitually to import a coarseness and a cruelty, as well as an unchivalric and ungenerous roughness, indicating, not so much that they do not appreciate the sacrifice which the woman makes in giving herself to them, as that they do not believe it is any sacrifice at all. In fine, so little respect does there seem to be left for

the feelings of women, so little belief in their virtue, so little trust in their sincerity or disinterestedness,—so completely have calculation, luxury, mutual contempt, and mutual mistrust, poisoned the tenderest relation of life and its purest passion—that the fitting epithet to apply to this phase of French society is not so much “immorality,” as hideous and cancerous corruption.

We are little disposed to indulge in trite moralities, or rigid censoriousness, or stern condemnations in which is no tenderness for frailty and no mercy for repentance. But surely, those who incline to think lightly of sacred ties and leniently of voluptuous indulgence and unlicensed attachments, may find a warning in these pictures of a social life where this lenience and levity are universal. They may see there how surely and how rapidly want of feeling follows want of principle; how disbelief in virtue grows out of experience in frailty; how scanty is the joy to be derived from the emotions of love when those emotions are reduced to their mere beggarly material elements, divorced from the redeeming spirit, and stripped of the concealing and mysterious drapery of fancy and of grace; and at what a fearful cost to heart and soul these feverish and wandering gratifications are purchased,—how poor the article and how terrible the price,—a disenchanted world, a paralyzed and threadbare soul, a past with no sweet and gentle memories, a future with no yearnings and no hopes.

It cannot be denied that the prevalence and wide circulation of such a popular literature as that of which we have endeavored to portray the more characteristic features, is a fact both fearful and momentous, whether we regard it as an indication or as an influence—as a faithful reflection of the moral condition of the people among whom it flourishes, or as the most powerful determining cause of that condition. The more inherent and universally diffused excellencies and defects of national character may, we believe, be discerned more truly in the favorite dramas and novels than in any other productions of the national mind. They show the sort of recreation which is instinctively resorted to when the tension of pursuit and effort is relaxed—the natural tendency of the unbent bow. They also show the food which is habitually presented to

the people by those who are familiar with their appetites and tastes, in their most inexpressible and passively recipient moods. And what justifies us in drawing the most condemnatory and melancholy conclusions from the multiplication and success of the works we have been considering is, that they are *characteristic, and not exceptional*. They are not the repast provided by an inferior class of writers for the interest and amusement of an inferior class of readers. They form the light reading, the *belles-lettres* of the vast majority—of the generality, in fact—of educated men and women. They indicate the order of thoughts and fancies to which these habitually and by preference turn, the plots which interest them most, the characters which seem to them most piquant or most familiar, the reflections which stir their feelings the most deeply, the principles or sentiments by which their actions are most usually guided, the virtues they most admire, the vices they most tolerate;—they reflect, in a word, the daily life and features of themselves, and of the circles in which they live and move.

These productions, too, for the most part, are written with great power and beauty, often with as much elevation of sentiment as is compatible with the absence of all strict principle and all definite morality. There is plenty of religion, and much even that is simple, touching, and true; but it is religion as affection and emotion—never as guide, governance, or creed. There is some reverence and much gratitude towards God; but little idea of obedience, sacrifice, or devotion. There is adulation and expectation, rather than worship or service. Then, again, there is vast sympathy with the suffering and the poor,—deep and genuine, if often irrational and extravagant; but it commonly degenerates into senseless animosity towards the rich, lawless hatred of settled institutions, and frantic rebellion against the righteous chain of cause and effect which governs social well-being. There are delineations of rapturous, irreproachable, almost angelic, love; but some unhalloved memory, or some disordered association, almost always steps in to stain the idol and to desecrate the shrine. There are eloquence, pathos, and fancy in rich profusion; characters of high endowment and noble aspiration; scenes of exquisite ten-

derness and chaste affection; pictures of saintly purity, heroic daring, and martyr-like devotion;—but something theatrical, morbid, and meretricious mingles with and mars the whole. There is every flower of Paradise,

“But the trail of the serpent is over them all.”

The grandest gifts placed at the service of the lowest passions;—the holiest sentiments and the fondest moments painted in the richest colors of the fancy, only to be withered by

cynical doubt or soiled by cynical indecency;—the most secret and sacred recesses of the soul explored and mastered, not for reverential contemplation of their beauties and their mysteries, but in order to expose them, with a hideous grin—naked, sensitive, and shrinking—to the desecrating sneer of a misbelieving and mocking world:—such is the work which genius must stoop to do, when faith in what is good, reverence for what is pure, and relish for what is natural, have died out from a nation's heart!

**AMERICAN RIVERS.**—Although no record exists of the volume of water discharged into the ocean respectively by the St. Lawrence, 1,891 miles in length, and the Mississippi, 3,500 miles long, there is no reason to doubt that the Mississippi discharges a much greater volume of water than the St. Lawrence. The mouth of the St. Lawrence is an estuary and the sea-water reaches to Kamouraska, 103 miles below Quebec, and 300 miles above Anticosti. On the contrary, the Mississippi has formed a delta, with a coast line 250 miles in length; and the extent of its basin, according to Johnston, is 982,400 square miles; whilst that of the St. Lawrence, and all its great lakes, is 297,600 square miles (537,000 according to Darby):—

“If the quantity of water discharged by rivers is, in similar climates, proportionate to the surface of the country which they drain, then the Mississippi discharges about three times as much water as all the Atlantic streams [of North America] united.”—*Geog. of America and the West Indies*, U. K. S., p. 204.—*Notes and Queries*.

**MAGNETIC DECLINATION.**—The operation for determining the true north, or meridian, in its more scientific and correct shape, is one of considerable nicety; but the following method will determine it, if much accuracy be not required: On the 15th June or 24th December when the clock and sun nearly coincide, plant a stick perpendicular to the horizon, and at two hours before noon mark accurately the extremity of the shadow of the stick, then from its base with the length of such shadow as a radius, trace a circle upon the ground; as the sun arrives gradually at its greatest altitude, the shadow of the stick will become gradually shorter, and will fall within the circumference of the circle which has been traced. As the sun declines, its shadow lengthens, and at two hours after noon will be the same length as at two hours before noon.

The meridian line pointing due north and south is the shortest shadow, or half-way betwixt the ten o'clock and two o'clock shadows. The longest and most accurate meridian line in the world is that drawn by Cassini upon the pavement of the church of St. Petronis in Bologna in Italy; it is one hundred and twenty feet in length. (*Math. Geog. U. K. S.* p. 7.) The general, as well as diurnal declination of the needle is determined by a transit instrument, of which a description is given in the *Penny Cyclopædia* (xxvi. 138.); the culmination of a circumpolar star, the angular distance of which is known, giving the true north, as the fixed point from which the declination of the needle, as it varies, is computed. The Pyramids of Egypt are made to face the four cardinal points. M. Noet found the north face of the great Pyramid to deviate only 19' 58'' from the true line east and west. (*Egypt, Ant. L. E. K.* ii. 304.)—*Notes and Queries*.

**THE FOUR GEORGES : GEORGE II.**—Horace Walpole, in his *Reminiscences of the Courts of George the First and Second* (chap. 6.), thus relates the destruction of George I.'s will:—

“At the first council held by the new sovereign, Dr. Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, produced the will of the late king, and delivered it to the successor, expecting it would be opened and read in council. On the contrary, his majesty put it into his pocket and stalked out of the room without uttering a word on the subject. The poor prelate was thunderstruck, and had not the presence of mind or the courage to demand the testament's being opened, or at least to have it registered. . . . As the king never mentioned the will more, whispers only by degrees informed the public that the will was burnt; at least that its injunctions were never fulfilled.”—Walpole's *Letters* (ed. by Cunningham), i. cxx.—*Notes and Queries*.

## PURGATORY.

'Tis ready; the priest they dismiss  
Though he fain would linger yet :  
And the sharp knife falls with a hiss,  
And the blood spurts out in a jet  
That the nearest who press, and the headsmen's  
dress, and the boards are wet.

The head in the basket falls  
Upright to the cheerful sky.  
Would you call those sightless balls ?  
Would you say there was blank in that eye ?  
Those features are wrought by no hearing, no  
thought ? Can the dead's face lie ?

Now, as it gazes aloft,  
You can see, if you fix on the face  
With the impress of living still soft,  
Emotions emotions chase.  
You have heard naught is fleetlier than thought ;  
would you witness the race ?

First through his mind there passed,  
And fell from his memory scales,  
The life that had been, so vast,  
Wrought in minutest details  
Where fancy supplies each gap to the eyes, if  
memory fails.

His boyhood went hurrying past,  
Even as in life it had flown,  
With resolves that were broken so fast,  
And endeavors that after were thrown :  
The years had been spent to his present content,  
and what could atone ?

The warning his father then spake,—  
Each gesture came lifelike to view :  
His mother's fond prayer, for her sake  
That narrow plain path to pursue :  
Vain warning, vain prayer, how potent ye were ;  
how feeble ye grew !

Thus on, and each link of the chain  
Brought matter to feed his regret,  
Till one gave a spur to his brain,  
And he thought—I will conquer it yet !  
These passions, this sloth, shall be checked in  
their growth : I will break from the net.

"I will live" . . . and he felt he was dead.  
No further repentance availed.  
Dead ; all his resources were fled,  
And even his hardihood failed.  
Almost his trust might crumple to dust, so rudely  
assailed.

This agony only resigned  
To a severer, the rod,  
When the next thought passed through his  
mind,  
"This life in a lifeless clod—  
I think, and am dead ; 'twas false that they said ;  
there is not a God !"

And thus as with glazing eye  
He sank into slow despair,  
One look at the cheerful sky,  
And he read his comfort there,—  
'Twas true that they said ; and the life of the  
head went out in a prayer.

EDWARD WILBERFORCE.

—*Fraser's Magazine*.

## EXIT BOMBALINO.

The earthquake growls beneath his feet,  
Vesuvius banks her fires, o'erhead,  
Bewildered *Sbirri* through the street  
Slink with a tamed and timorous tread.  
The priest holds up his trembling hands,  
In vain to sainted Januarius ;  
The despot's hungry hireling bands  
Begin to deem their pay precarious.  
Armed retribution pours its force  
From Spartivent to Porto Fino,  
Resistance melts before its course—  
*Et exit Bombalino !*

No friend in this, his hour of need,  
No hope or hold in his despair !  
Each stay turns out a broken reed,  
Each safeguard hath become a snare.  
The rogues who were so swift to serve  
Are even swifter to betray,  
Each back that bent in supplest curve  
On readiest hinges turns away.  
What faith is bought by fear or gold,  
'Tis time, at length, that even he know,—  
His soldiers false, his courtiers cold,  
*En exit Bombalino !*

His dungeons have given up their dead,  
Or, worse, their living-dead restored.  
Truth lifts, amazed, her muffled head,  
Unchecked for once by stick or sword.  
And from the light that beams about  
Her sorely-scarred yet stately brow,  
Shrink back, abashed, the loathsome rout  
That battened in the dark till now.  
Amidst such greeting and good-will,  
As subjects unto king or queen owe,  
Who've ruled but by the powers of ill—  
*Sic exit Bombalino !*

And Garibaldi's face is worn  
Where this king's image ought to be ;  
And Garibaldi's name is borne  
On wings of blessing o'er the sea.  
At Garibaldi's summons spring  
Men's ready hearts, and hands, and treasure,  
Before him Italy doth fling  
Her new-roused life in stintless measure.  
But now alone against a host,  
And now a host, as land and sea know,  
Unboasting he caps Cæsar's boast—\*  
*Et exit Bombalino !*

So be it still, when powers of Ill  
And powers of Good, for issue met,  
Hand against hand, and brand to brand,  
In Armageddon's fight are set !  
May Evil show what rotten roots  
Its hugest upas-growth confirm,  
And Good make known what mighty shoots  
Are latent in its smallest germ.  
With jubilee and joyous din,  
From Sicily to San Marino,  
Lo ! Garibaldi enters in,  
*Et exit Bombalino !*

—*Punch*.\* *Veni, vidi, vici.*

From Fraser's Magazine.

CONCERNING SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS;  
WITH SOME THOUGHTS UPON THE SWING  
OF THE PENDULUM.\*

"I HAVE eaten up all the grounds of my tea," said, many years since, in my hearing, in modest, yet triumphant tones, a little girl of seven years old. I have but to close my eyes, and I see all that scene again, almost as plainly as ever. Six or seven children (I am one of them) are sitting round a tea-table; their father and mother are there too, and an old gentleman, who is (in his own judgment) one of the wisest of men. I see the dining-room, large and low-ceilinged; the cheerful glow of the autumnal fire; the little faces in the soft candle-light, for glaring gas was then unknown. There had been much talk about the sinfulness of waste—of the waste of even very little things. The old gentleman, so wise (in his own judgment, and indeed in my judgment at that period), was instilling into the children's minds some of those lessons which are often impressed upon children by people (I am now aware) of no great wisdom or cleverness. He had dwelt at considerable length upon the sinfulness of wasting any thing; likewise on the sinfulness of children being saucy or particular as to what they should eat. He enforced, with no small solemnity, the duty of children's eating what was set before them without minding whether it was good or not, or at least without minding whether they liked it or not. The poor little girl listened to all that was said, and of course received it all as indubitably true. Waste and sauciness, she saw, were wrong, so she judged that the very opposite of waste and sauciness must be right. Accordingly, she thought she would turn to use something that was very small, but still something that ought not to be wasted. Accordingly, she thought she would show the docility of her taste by eating up something that was very disagreeable. Here was an opportunity at

\* For the suggestion of the subject of this essay, and for many valuable hints as to its treatment, I am indebted to the kindness of the Archbishop of Dublin. Indeed, in all that part of the essay which treats of *Secondary Vulgar Errors*, I have done little more than expand and illustrate the skeleton of thought supplied to me by Archbishop Whately. I regret that the pressure of more important duties prevented the article from being entirely written by the eminent prelate himself. It should be added that for the *title* of the essay the archbishop is not responsible.

once of acting out the great principles to which she had been listening. And while a boy, evidently destined to be a metaphysician, and evidently possessed of the spirit of resistance to constituted authority whether in government or doctrine, boldly argued that it could not be wicked in him to hate onions, because God had made him so that he did hate onions, and (going still deeper into things) insisted that to eat a thing when you did not want it was wasting it much more truly than it would be wasting it to leave it; the little girl ate up all the grounds left in her teacup, and then announced the fact with considerable complacency.

Very, very natural. The little girl's act was a slight straw showing how a great current sets. It was a fair exemplification of a tendency which is woven into the make of our being. Tell the average mortal that it is wrong to walk on the left side of the road, and in nine cases out of ten he will conclude that the proper thing must be to walk on the right side of the road; whereas in actual life, and in almost all opinions, moral, political, and religious, the proper thing is to walk neither on the left nor on the right side, but somewhere about the middle. Say to the shipmaster, You are to sail through a perilous strait; you will have the raging Scylla on one hand as you go. His natural reply will be, Well, I will keep as far away from it as possible; I will keep close by the other side. But the rejoinder must be, No, you will be quite as ill off *there*; you will be in equal peril on the other side; *there* is Charybdis. What you have to do is to keep at a safe distance from each. In avoiding the one, do not run into the other.

It seems to be a great law of the universe, that Wrong lies upon either side of the way, and that Right is the narrow path between. There are the two ways of doing wrong—Too Much and Too Little. Go to the extreme right hand, and you are wrong; go to the extreme left hand, and you are wrong too. That you may be right, you have to keep somewhere between these two extremes; but not necessarily in the exact middle. All this, of course, is part of the great fact that in this world evil has the advantage of good. It is easier to do wrong than right.

It is very natural to think that if one thing or course be wrong, its reverse must be right. If it be wrong to walk towards the east,



surely, it must be right to walk towards the west. If it be wrong to dress in black, it must be right to dress in white. It is somewhat hard to say, *Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt*—to declare, as if that were a statement of the whole truth, that *fools mistake reverse of wrong for right*. Fools do so, indeed, but not fools only. The average human being, with the most honest intentions, is prone to mistake reverse of wrong for right. We are fond, by our natural constitution, of broad distinctions—of classifications that put the whole interests and objects of this world to the right hand and to the left. We long for ay or no—for heads or tails. We are impatient of limitations, qualifications, restrictions. You remember how Mr. Micawber explained the philosophy of income and expenditure, and urged people never to run in debt. *Income*, said he, *a hundred pounds a year; expenditure ninety-nine pounds nineteen shillings: Happiness. Income, a hundred pounds a year; expenditure a hundred pounds and one shilling: Misery*. You see the principle involved is, that if you are not happy, you must be miserable—that if you are not miserable, you must be happy. If you are not any particular thing, then you are its opposite. If you are not for, then you are against. If you are not black, many men will jump to the conclusion that you are white: the fact probably being that you are gray. If not a Whig, you must be a Tory: in truth, you are a Liberal-Conservative. We desiderate in all things the sharp decidedness of the verdict of a jury—guilty or not guilty. We like to conclude that if a man be not very good, then he is very bad; if not very clever, then very stupid; if not very wise, then a fool: whereas, in fact, the man probably is a curious mixture of good and evil, strength and weakness, wisdom and folly, knowledge and ignorance, cleverness and stupidity.

Let it be here remarked, that in speaking of it as an error to take *reverse of wrong for right*, I use the words in their ordinary sense, as generally understood. In common language the *reverse* of a thing is taken to mean the thing at the *opposite end of the scale from it*. Thus black is the reverse of white, bigotry of latitudinarianism, malevolence of benevolence, parsimony of extravagance, and the like. Of course, in strictness, these things are not the *reverse* of one

another. In strictness, the reverse of wrong always is right; for, to speak with severe precision, the reverse of *steering upon Scylla* is simply *not steering upon Scylla*; the reverse of *being extravagant* is not *being parsimonious*—it is simply *not being extravagant*; the reverse of *walking eastward* is not *walking westward*—it is simply *not walking eastward*. And that may include standing still or walking to any point of the compass except the east. But I understand the *reverse of a thing* as meaning the *opposite extreme* from it. And you see, the Latin words quoted above are more precise than the English. It is severely true, that *while fools think to shun error on one side, they run into the contrary error*; i.e., the error that lies equi-distant, or nearly equi-distant, on the other side of the line of right.

One class of the errors into which men are prone to run under this natural impulse are those which have been termed *Secondary Vulgar Errors*. A *vulgar error*, you will understand, my reader, does not by any means signify an error into which only the vulgar are likely to fall. It does not by any means signify a mistaken belief which will be taken up only by inferior and uneducated minds. A *vulgar error* means an error either in conduct or belief into which *man*, by the make of his being, is likely to fall. Now, people a degree wiser and more thoughtful than the mass, discover that these vulgar errors are errors. They conclude that their opposites (i.e., the things at the other extremity of the scale) must be right; and by running into the opposite extreme they run just as far wrong upon the other side. There is too great a reaction. The twig was bent to the right—they bend it to the left, forgetting that the right thing was that the twig should be straight. If convinced that waste and sauciness are wrong, they proceed to eat the grounds of their tea; if convinced that self-indulgence is wrong, they conclude that hair-shirts and midnight floggings are right; if convinced that the Church of Rome has too many ceremonies, they resolve that they will have no ceremonies at all; if convinced that it is unworthy to grovel in the presence of a duke, they conclude that it will be a fine thing to refuse the duke ordinary civility; if convinced that monarchs are not much wiser or better than other human beings, they run off into the belief that



all kings have been little more than incarnate demons; if convinced that representative government often works very imperfectly, they raise a cry for imperialism; if convinced that monarchy has its abuses, they call out for republicanism; if convinced that Britain has many things which are not so good as they ought to be, they keep constantly extolling the perfection of the United States.

Now, inasmuch as a rise of even one step in the scale of thought elevates the man who has taken it above the vast host of men who have never taken even that one step, the number of people who (at least in matters of any moment) arrive at the secondary vulgar error is much less than the number of the people who stop at the Primary Vulgar Error. Very great multitudes of human beings think it a very fine thing, the very finest of all human things, to be very rich. A much smaller number, either from the exercise of their own reflective powers, or from the indoctrination of romantic novels and overdrawn religious books, run to the opposite extreme: undervalue wealth, deny that it adds anything to human comfort and enjoyment, declare that it is an unmixed evil, profess to despise it. I dare say that many readers of the *Idyls of the King* will so misunderstand that exquisite song of "Fortune and her Wheel," as to see in it only the charming and sublime embodiment of a secondary vulgar error,—the error, to wit, that wealth and outward circumstances are of no consequence at all. To me that song appears rather to take the further step, and to reach the conclusion in which is embodied the deliberate wisdom of humankind upon this matter: the conclusion which shakes from itself on either hand either vulgar error: the idolization of wealth on the one side, the contempt of it on the other: and to convey to the sobered judgment that while the advantages and refinements of fortune are so great that no thoughtful man can long despise it, the responsibilities and temptations of it are so great that no thoughtful man will much repine if he fail to reach it; and thus that we may genially acquiesce in that which it pleases God to send. Midway between two vulgar errors: steering a sure track between Scylla and Charybdis; the grovelling multitude to the left, the romantic few to the right; stand the words of

inspired wisdom. The pendulum had probably oscillated many times between the two errors, before it settled at the central truth: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

But although these errors of reaction are less common than the primary vulgar errors, they are better worth noticing: inasmuch as in many cases they are the errors of the well-intentioned. People fall into the primary vulgar errors without ever thinking of right or wrong: merely feeling an impulse to go there, or to think thus. But worthy folk, for the most part, fall into the secondary vulgar errors, while honestly endeavoring to escape what they have discerned to be wrong. Not indeed that it is always in good faith that men run to the opposite extreme. Sometimes they do it in pet and perversity, being well aware that they are doing wrong. You hint to some young friend, to whom you are nearly enough related to be justified in doing so, that the dinner to which he has invited you, with several others, is unnecessarily fine, is somewhat extravagant, is beyond what he can afford. The young friend asks you back in a week or two, and sets before you a feast of salt herrings and potatoes. Now the fellow did not run into this extreme with the honest intention of doing right. He knew perfectly well that this was not what you meant. He did not go through this piece of folly in the sincere desire to avoid the other error of extravagance. Or, you are a country clergyman. You are annoyed, Sunday by Sunday, by a village lad who, from enthusiasm or ostentation, sings so loud in church as to disturb the whole congregation. You hint to him, as kindly as you can, that there is something very pleasing about the softer tones of his voice, and that you would like to hear them more frequently. But the lad sees through your civil way of putting the case. His vanity is touched. He sees you mean that you don't like to hear him bellow: and next Sunday you will observe that he shuts his hymn-book in dudgeon, and will not sing at all. Leave the blockhead to himself. Do not set yourself to stroke down his self-conceit: he knows quite well he is doing wrong: there is neither sense nor honesty in what

he does. You remark at dinner, while staying with a silly old gentleman, that the plum-pudding, though admirable, perhaps errs on the side of over-richness; next day he sets before you a mass of stiff paste with no plums at all, and says, with a look of sly stupidity, "Well, I hope you are satisfied now." Politeness prevents your replying, "No, you don't. You know that is not what I meant. You are a fool." You remember the boy in *Pickwick*, who on his father finding fault with him for something wrong he had done, offered to kill himself if that would be any satisfaction to his parent. In this case you have a more recondite instance of this peculiar folly. Here the primary course is tacitly assumed, without being stated. The primary impulse of the human being is to take care of himself; the opposite of *that* of course is to kill himself. And the boy, being chidden for doing something which might rank under the general head of taking care of himself, proposed (as that course appeared to be unsatisfactory) to take the opposite one. "You don't take exercise enough," said a tutor to a wrong-headed boy who was under his care: "you ought to walk more." Next morning the perverse fellow entered the breakfast parlor in a fagged condition, and said, with the air of a martyr, "Well, I trust I have taken exercise enough to-day: I have walked twenty miles this morning." As for all such manifestations of the disposition to run into opposite extremes, let them be treated as manifestations of pettiness, perversity, and dishonesty. In some cases a high-spirited youth may be excused them; but, for the most part, they come with doggedness, wrong-headedness, and dense stupidity. And any pretext that they are exhibited with an honest intention to do right, ought to be regarded as a transparently false pretext.

I have now before me a list (prepared by a much stronger hand than mine) of honest cases in which men, avoiding Scylla, run into Charybdis: in which men, thinking to bend the crooked twig straight, bend it backwards. But before mentioning these, it may be remarked, that there often is such a thing as a reaction from a natural tendency, even when that natural tendency is not towards what may be called a primary vulgar error. The law of reaction extends to all that hu-

man beings can ever feel the disposition to think or do. There are, doubtless, minds of great fixity of opinion and motive: and there are certain things, in the case of almost all men, as regards which their belief and their active bias never vary through life: but with most human beings, with nations, with humankind, as regards very many and very important matters, as surely and as far as the pendulum has swung to the right, so surely and so far will it swing to the left. I do not say that an opinion in favor of monarchy is a primary vulgar error; or that an opinion in favor of republicanism is a secondary: both may be equally right: but assuredly each of these is a reaction from the other. America, for instance, is one great reaction from Europe. The principle on which these reactionary swings of the pendulum take place, is plain. Whatever be your present position, you feel its evils and drawbacks keenly. Your feeling of the present evil is much more vivid than your imagination of the evil which is sure to be inherent in the opposite system, whatever that may be. You live in a country where the national church is Presbyterian. You see, day by day, many inconveniences and disadvantages inherent in that form of church government. It is of the nature of evil to make its presence much more keenly felt than the presence of good. So, while keenly alive to the drawbacks of presbytery, you are hardly conscious of its advantages. You swing over, let us suppose, to the other end: you swing over from Scotland into England, from presbytery to episcopacy. For a while you are quite delighted to find yourself free from the little evils of which you had been wont to complain. But by and by the drawbacks of episcopacy begin to push themselves upon your notice. You have escaped one set of disadvantages: you find that you have got into the middle of another. Scylla no longer bellows in your hearing: but Charybdis whirls you round. You begin to feel that the country and the system yet remain to be sought, in which some form of evil, of inconvenience, of worry, shall not press you. Am I wrong in fancying, dear friends more than one or two, that but for very shame the pendulum would swing back again to the point from which it started: and you, kindly Scots, would find yourselves more at home in kindly and homely Scotland with her

simple forms and faith? So far as my experience has gone, I think that in all matters not of vital moment, it is best that the pendulum should stay at the end of the swing where it first found itself: it will be in no more stable position at the other end: and it will somehow feel a stranger there. And you, my friend, though in your visits to Anglican territory you heartily conform to the Anglican Church, and enjoy as much as mortal can her noble cathedrals and her stately worship; still I know that after all you cannot shake off the spell in which the old remembrances of your boyhood have bound you. I know that your heart warms to the Burning Bush; \* and that it will, till death chills it.

A noteworthy fact in regard to the swing of the pendulum, is that the secondary tendency is sometimes found in the ruder state of society, and the less reflective man. Naturalness comes last. The pendulum started from naturalness: it swung over into artificiality; and with thoughtful people it has swung back to naturalness again. Thus it is natural, when in danger, to be afraid. It is natural, when you are possessed by any strong feeling, to show it. You see all this in children: this is the point which the pendulum starts from. It swings over, and we find a reaction from this. The reaction is, to maintain and exhibit perfect coolness and indifference in danger; to pretend to be incapable of fear. This state of things we find in the Red Indian, a rude and uncivilized being. But it is plain that with people who are able to think, there must be a reaction from this. The pendulum cannot long stay in a position which flies so completely in the face of the law of gravitation. It is pure nonsense to talk about being incapable of fear. I remember reading somewhere about Queen Elizabeth, that "her soul was incapable of fear." That statement is false and absurd. You may regard fear as unmanly and unworthy: you may repress the manifestations of it; but the state of mind which (in beings not properly monstrous or defective) follows the perception of being in danger, is fear. As surely as the perception of light is sight, so surely is the perception of danger fear. And for a man to say that his soul is incapable of fear, is just as absurd as to say that from a peculiarity of constitution,

\* The scutcheon of the Church of Scotland.

when dipped in water, he does not get wet. You, human being, whoever you may be, when you are placed in danger, and know you are placed in danger, and reflect on the fact, you feel afraid. Don't vapor and say no; we know how the mental machine *must* work, unless it be diseased. Now, the thoughtful man admits all this: he admits that a bullet through his brain would be a very serious thing for himself, and likewise for his wife and children; he admits that he shrinks from such a prospect; he will take pains to protect himself from the risk; but he says that if duty requires him to run the risk he will run it. *This* is the courage of the civilized man, as opposed to the blind, bull-dog insensibility of the savage. *This* is courage—to know the existence of danger, but to face it nevertheless. Here, under the influence of longer thought, the pendulum has swung into common sense, though not quite back to the point from which it started. Of course, it still keeps swinging about in individual minds. The other day I read in a newspaper a speech by a youthful rifleman, in which he boasted that no matter to what danger exposed, *his* corps would never take shelter behind trees and rocks, but would stand boldly out to the aim of the enemy. I was very glad to find this speech answered in a letter to the *Times*, written by a rifleman of great experience and proved bravery. The experienced man pointed out that the inexperienced man was talking nonsense: that true courage appeared in manfully facing risks which were inevitable, but not in running into needless peril; and that the business of a soldier was to be as useful to his country and as destructive to the enemy as possible, and not to make needless exhibitions of personal foolhardiness. Thus swings the pendulum as to danger and fear. The point of departure, the primary impulse, is,—

1. An impulse to avoid danger at all hazard; i.e., to run away, and save yourself, however discredibly.

The pendulum swings to the other extremity, and we have the secondary impulse—

2. An impulse to disregard danger, and even to run into it, as if it were of no consequence at all; i.e., young-rifleman foolhardiness, and Red Indian insensibility.

The pendulum comes so far back, and rests at the point of wisdom:—

3. A determination to avoid all danger, the running into which would do no good, and which may be avoided consistently with honor; but manfully to face danger, however great, that comes in the way of duty.

But after all this deviation from the track, I return to my list of Secondary Vulgar Errors, run into with good and honest intentions. Here is the first:—

Don't you know, my reader, that it is natural to think very bitterly of the misconduct which affects yourself? If a man cheats your friend, or cheats your slight acquaintance, or cheats some one who is quite unknown to you, by selling him a lame horse, you disapprove his conduct, indeed, but not nearly so much as if he had cheated yourself. You learn that Miss Limejuice has been disseminating a grossly untrue account of some remarks which you made in her hearing; and your first impulse is to condemn her malicious falsehood much more severely than if she had merely told a few lies about some one else. Yet it is quite evident that if we were to estimate the doings of men with perfect justice, we should fix solely on the moral element in their doings; and the accidental circumstance of the offence or injury to ourselves would be neither here nor there. The primary vulgar error, then in this case is, undue and excessive disapprobation of misconduct from which *we* have suffered. No one but a very stupid person would, if it were fairly put to him, maintain that this extreme disapprobation was right: but it cannot be denied that this is the direction to which *all* human beings are likely, at first, to feel an impulse to go. A man does you some injury; you are much more angry than if he had done the like injury to some one else. You are much angrier when your own servants are guilty of little neglects and follies, than when the servants of your next neighbor are guilty in a precisely similar degree. The prime minister (or chancellor) fails to make you a queen's counsel or a judge: you are much angrier than if he had overlooked some other man, of precisely equal merit. And I do not mean merely that the injury done to yourself comes more home to you, but that positively you think it a worse thing. It seems as if there were more of moral evil in it. The boy who steals your plums seems worse than other boys stealing other plums. The servant who sells your oats and starves

your horses, seems worse than other servants who do the like. It is not merely that you feel where the shoe pinches yourself, more than where it pinches another: *that* is all quite right. It is that you have a tendency to think it is a worse shoe than another which gives an exactly equal amount of pain. You are prone to dwell upon and brood over the misconduct which affected yourself.

Well, you begin to see that this is unworthy, that selfishness and mortified conceit are at the foundation of it. You determine that you will shake yourself free from this vulgar error. What more magnanimous, you think, than to do the opposite of the wrong thing? Surely, it will be generous, and even heroic, to wholly acquit the wrong-doer, and even to cherish him for a bosom friend. So the pendulum swings over to the opposite extreme, and you land in the secondary vulgar error. I do not mean to say that in practice many persons are likely to thus bend the twig backwards; but it is no small evil to think that it would be a right thing, and a fine thing to do even that which you never intend to do. So you write an essay, or even a book, the gist of which is that it is a grand thing to select for a friend and guide the human being who has done you signal injustice and harm. Over that book, if it be a prettily written tale, many young ladies will weep: and though without the faintest intention of imitating your hero's behavior, they will think that it would be a fine thing if they did so. And it is a great mischief to pervert the moral judgment and falsely to excite the moral feelings. You forget that wrong is wrong, though it be done against yourself, and that you have no right to acquit the wrong to yourself as though it were no wrong at all. *That* lies beyond your province. You may forgive the personal offence, but it does not rest with you to acquit the guilt. You have no right to confuse moral distinctions by practically saying that wrong is not wrong, because it is done against you. All wrong is against very many things and very grave things, besides being against you. It is not for you to speak in the name of God and the universe. You may not wish to say much about the injury done to yourself, but *there it is*; and as to the choosing for your friend the man who has greatly injured you, in most cases such a choice would be a very unwise one, because in most cases

it would amount to this—that you should select a man for a certain post mainly because he has shown himself possessed of qualities which unfit him for that post. *That* surely would be very foolish. If you had to appoint a postman, would you choose a man because he had no legs? And what is very foolish can never be very magnanimous.

The right course to follow lies between the two which have been set out. The man who has done wrong to you is still a *wrong-doer*. The question you have to consider is, What ought your conduct to be towards a wrong-doer? Let there be no harbor given to any feeling of personal revenge. But remember that it is your duty to disapprove what is wrong, and that it is wisdom not too far to trust a man who has proved himself unworthy to be trusted. I have no feeling of selfish bitterness against the person who deceived me deliberately and grossly, yet I cannot but judge that deliberate and gross deceit is bad, and I cannot but judge that the person who deceived me once might, if tempted, deceive me again; so he shall not have the opportunity. I look at the horse which a friend offers me for a short ride. I discern upon the knees of the animal a certain slight but unmistakable roughness of the hair. That horse has been down; and if I mount that horse at all (which I shall not do except in a case of necessity), I shall ride him with a tight rein and with a sharp look-out for rolling stones.

Another matter in regard to which Scylla and Charybdis are very discernible is the fashion in which human beings think and speak of the good or bad qualities of their friends.

The primary tendency here is to blindness to the faults of a friend, and over-estimate of his virtues and qualifications. Most people are disposed extravagantly to overvalue any thing belonging to or connected with themselves. A farmer tells you that there never were such turnips as his turnips; a schoolboy thinks that the world cannot show boys so clever as those with whom he is competing for the first place in his class; a clever student at college tells you what magnificent fellows are certain of his comrades—how sure they are to become great men in life. Talk of Tennyson! You have not read Smith's prize poem. Talk of Macaulay! Ah, if you could see Brown's prize

essay! A mother tells you (fathers are generally less infatuated) how her boy was beyond comparison the most distinguished and clever in his class—how he stood quite apart from any of the others. Your eye happens to fall a day or two afterwards upon the prize-list advertised in the newspapers, and you discover that (curiously) the most distinguished and clever boy in that particular school is rewarded with the seventh prize. I dare say you may have met with families in which there existed the most absurd and preposterous belief as to their superiority, social, intellectual, and moral, above other families which were as good or better. And it is to be admitted, that if you are happy enough to have a friend whose virtues and qualifications are really high, your primary tendency will probably be to fancy him a great deal cleverer, wiser, and better than he really is, and to imagine that he possesses no faults at all. The over-estimate of his good qualities will be the result of your seeing them constantly, and having their excellence much pressed on your attention, while from not knowing so well other men who are quite as good, you are led to think that these good qualities are more rare and excellent than in fact they are. And you may possibly regard it as a duty to shut your eyes to the faults of those who are dear to you, and to persuade yourself, against your judgment, that they have no faults or none worth thinking of. One can imagine a child painfully struggling to be blind to a parent's errors, and thinking it undutiful and wicked to admit the existence of that which is too evident. And if you know well a really good and able man, you will very naturally think his goodness and his ability to be relatively much greater than they are. For goodness and ability are in truth very noble things: the more you look at them the more you will feel this: and it is natural to judge that what is so noble cannot be very common; whereas in fact there is much more good in this world than we are ready to believe. If you find an intelligent person who believes that some particular author is by far the best in the language, or that some particular composer's music is by far the finest, or that some particular preacher is by far the most eloquent and useful, or that some particular river has by far the finest scenery, or that some particular sea-side



place has by far the most bracing and exhilarating air, or that some particular magazine is ten thousand miles ahead of all competitors, the simple explanation in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred is this—that the honest individual who holds these overstrained opinions *knows* a great deal better than he knows any others, that author, that music, that preacher, that river, that sea-side place, that magazine. He knows how good they are: and not having much studied the merits of competing things, he does not know that these are very nearly as good.

But I do not think that there is any subject whatever in regard to which it is so capricious and arbitrary whether you shall run into Scylla or into Charybdis. It depends entirely on how it strikes the mind, whether you shall go off a thousand miles to the right or a thousand miles to the left. You know, if you fire a rifle-bullet at an iron-coated ship, the bullet, if it impinge upon the iron plate at A, may glance away to the west, while if it impinge upon the iron plate at B, only an inch distant from A, it may glance off towards the directly opposite point of the compass. A very little thing makes all the difference. You stand in the engine-room of a steamer; you admit the steam to the cylinders, and the paddles turn ahead; a touch of a lever, you admit the selfsame steam to the selfsame cylinders, and the paddles turn astern. It is so oftentimes in the moral world. The turning of a straw decides whether the engines shall work forward or backward.

Now, given a friend to whom you are very warmly attached: it is a toss-up whether your affection for your friend shall make you,

1. Quite blind to his faults; or,
2. Acutely and painfully alive to his faults.

Sincere affection may impel either way. Your friend, for instance, makes a speech at a public dinner. He makes a tremendously bad speech. Now, your love for him may lead you either

1. To fancy that his speech is a remarkably good one; or,
2. To feel acutely how bad his speech is, and to wish you could sink through the floor for very shame.

If you did not care for him at all, you

would not mind a bit whether he made a fool of himself or not. But if you really care for him, and if the speech be really very bad, and if you are competent to judge whether speeches in general be bad or not, I do not see how you can escape falling either into Scylla or Charybdis. And accordingly, while there are families in which there exists a preposterous over-estimate of the talents and acquirements of their several members, there are other families in which the rifle-bullet has glanced off in the opposite direction, and in which there exists a depressing and unreasonable under-estimate of the talents and acquirements of their several members. I have known such a thing as a family in which certain boys during their early education had it ceaselessly drilled into them that they were the idlest, stupidest, and most ignorant boys in the world. The poor little fellows grew up under that gloomy belief: for conscience is a very artificial thing, and you may bring up very good boys in the belief that they are very bad. At length happily, they went to a great public school; and like rockets they went up forthwith to the top of their classes, and never lost their places there. From school they went to the university, and there won honors more eminent than had ever been won before. It will not surprise people who know much of human nature to be told that through this brilliant career of school and college work the home belief in their idleness and ignorance continued unchanged, and that hardly at its end was the toil-worn senior wrangler regarded as other than an idle and useless blockhead. Now, the affection which prompts the under-estimate may be quite as real and deep as that which prompts the over-estimate, but its manifestation is certainly the less amiable and pleasing. I have known a successful author whose relatives never believed, till the reviews assured them of it, that his writings were any thing but contemptible and discreditable trash.

I have been speaking of an honest though erroneous estimate of the qualities of one's friends, rather than of any expression of that estimate. The primary tendency is to an over-estimate; the secondary tendency is to an under-estimate. A commonplace man thinks there never was a mortal so wise and good as the friend he values; a man who is a thousandth part of a degree less common-



place resolves that he will keep clear of that error, and accordingly he feels bound to exaggerate the failings of his friend and to extenuate his good qualities. He thinks that a friend's judgment is very good and sound, and that he may well rely upon it; but for fear of showing it too much regard, he probably shows it too little. He thinks that in some dispute his friend is right; but for fear of being partial he decides that his friend is wrong. It is obvious that in any instance in which a man, seeking to avoid the primary error of over-estimating his friend, falls into the secondary of under-estimating him, he will (if any importance be attached to his judgment) damage his friend's character; for most people will conclude that he is saying of his friend the best that can be said, and that if even *he* admits that there is so little to approve about his friend, there must be very little indeed to approve; whereas the truth may be, that he is saying the worst that can be said—that no man could with justice give a worse picture of the friend's character.

Not very far removed from this pair of vulgar errors stand the following:—

The primary vulgar error is, to set up as an infallible oracle one whom we regard as wise—to regard any question as settled finally if we know what is his opinion upon it. You remember the man in the *Spectator* who was always quoting the sayings of Mr. Nisby. There was a report in London that the grand vizier was dead. The good man was uncertain whether to believe the report or not. He went and talked with Mr. Nisby and returned with his mind re-assured. Now, he enters in his diary that "the grand vizier was certainly dead." Considering the weakness of the reasoning powers of many people, there is something pleasing after all in this tendency to look round for somebody stronger upon whom they may lean. It is wise and natural in a scarlet-runner to climb up some thing, for it could not grow up by itself; and for practical purposes it is well that in each household there should be a little pope, whose *dicta* on all topics shall be unquestionable. It saves what is to many people the painful effort of making up their mind what they are to do or to think. It enables them to think or act with much greater decision and confidence. Most men have always a lurking distrust of their own

judgment, unless they find it confirmed by that of somebody else. There are very many decent commonplace people who, if they had been reading a book or article and had been thinking it very fine, would, if you were resolutely and loudly to declare in their hearing that it was wretched trash, begin to think that it was wretched trash too.

The primary vulgar error, then, is to regard as an oracle one whom we esteem as wise; and the secondary, the Charybdis opposite to this Scylla, is, to entertain an excessive dread of being too much led by one whom we esteem as wise. I mean an honest, candid dread. I do not mean a petted, wrong-headed, pragmatistical determination to let him see that you can think for yourself. You see, my friend, I don't suppose you to be a self-conceited fool. You remember how Presumption, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, on being offered some good advice, cut his his kind adviser short by declaring that *Every tub must stand on its own bottom*. We have all known men, young and old, who, upon being advised to do something which they knew they ought to do, would, out of pure perversity and a wrong-headed independence, go and do just the opposite thing. The secondary error of which I am now thinking is that of the man who honestly dreads making too much of the judgment of any mortal: and who, acting from a good intention, probably goes wrong in the same direction as the wrong-headed, conceited man. Now, don't you know that to such an extent does this morbid fear of trusting too much to any mortal go in some men, that in their practical belief you would think that the fact of any man being very wise was a reason why his judgment should be set aside as unworthy of consideration; and more particularly, that the fact of any man being supposed to be a powerful reasoner, was quite enough to show that all he says is to go for nothing? You are quite aware how jauntily some people use this last consideration, to sweep away at once all the reasons given by an able and ingenious speaker or writer. And it cuts the ground effectually from under his feet. You state an opinion, somewhat opposed to that commonly received. An honest, stupid person meets it with a surprised stare. You tell him (I am recording what I have myself witnessed) that you have been reading a work on the subject by a certain

prelate: you state as well as you can the arguments which are set forth by the distinguished prelate. These arguments seem of great weight. They deserve at least to be carefully considered. They seem to prove the novel opinion to be just: they assuredly call on candid minds to ponder the whole matter well before relapsing into the old, current way of thinking. Do you expect that the honest, stupid person will judge thus? If so, you are mistaken. He is not shaken in the least by all these strong reasons. The man who has set these reasons forth is known to be a master of logic: *that* is good ground why all his reasons should count for nothing. *Oh*, says the stupid, honest person, *we all know that the archbishop can prove any thing!* And so the whole thing is finally settled.

I have a considerable list of instances in which the reaction from an error on one side of the line of right, lands in error equally distant from the line of right on the other side: but it is needless to go on to illustrate these at length; the mere mention of them will suffice to suggest many thoughts to the intelligent reader. A primary vulgar error, to which very powerful minds have frequently shown a strong tendency, is bigoted intolerance: intolerance in politics, in religion, in ecclesiastical affairs, in morals, in anything. You may safely say that nothing but most unreasonable bigotry would lead a Tory to say that all Whigs are scoundrels, or a Whig to say that all Tories are bloated tyrants or crawling sycophants. I must confess that, in severe reason, it is impossible entirely to justify the Churchman who holds that all Dissenters are extremely bad; though (so does inveterate prepossession warp the intellect) I have also to admit that it appears to me that for a Dissenter to hold that there is little or no good in the Church is a great deal worse. There is something fine, however, about a heartily intolerant man: you like him, though you disapprove of him. Even if I were inclined to Whiggery, I should admire the downright dictum of Dr. Johnson, that *the devil was the first Whig*. Even if I were a Nonconformist, I should like Sydney Smith the better for the singular proof of his declining strength which he once adduced: "I do believe," he said, "that if you were to put a knife into my hand, I should not have vigor

enough to stick it into a Dissenter!" The secondary error in this respect is a latitudinarian liberality which regards truth and falsehood as matters of indifference. Genuine liberality of sentiment is a good thing, and difficult as it is good: but much liberality, political and religious, arises really from the fact, that the liberal man does not care a rush about the matter in debate. It is very easy to be tolerant in a case in which you have no feeling whatever either way. The Churchman who does not mind a bit whether the Church stands or falls, has no difficulty in tolerating the enemies and assailants of the Church. It is different with the man who holds the existence of a national establishment as a vital matter. And I have generally remarked that when clergymen of the Church profess extreme catholicity of spirit, and declare that they do not regard it as a thing of the least consequence whether a man be Churchman or Dissenter, intelligent Nonconformists receive such protestation with much contempt, and (possibly with injustice) suspect their utterer of hypocrisy. If you really care much about any principle, and if you regard it as of essential importance, you cannot help feeling a strong impulse to intolerance of those who decidedly and actively differ from you.

Here are some further vulgar errors, primary and secondary:—

Primary—Idleness, and excessive self-indulgence;

Secondary—Penances, and self-inflicted tortures.

Primary—*Swallowing whole* all that is said or done by one's party;

Secondary—Dread of quite agreeing, or quite disagreeing, on any point with any one; and trying to keep at exactly an equal distance from each.

Primary—following the fashion with indiscriminate ardor;

Secondary—Finding a merit in singularity, as such.

Primary—Being quite captivated with thought which is striking and showy, but not sound;

Secondary—Concluding that whatever is sparkling must be unsound.

I hardly know which tendency of the following is the primary, and which the secondary; but I am sure that both exist. It may depend upon the district of country, and the

age of the thinker, which of the two is the action and which the reaction :—

1. Thinking a clergyman a model of perfection, because he is a stout, dashing fellow who plays at cricket and goes out fox-hunting; and, generally, who flies in the face of all conventionalism.

2. Thinking a clergyman a model of perfection because he is of very grave and decorous deportment; never plays at cricket, and never goes out fox-hunting; and, generally, conforms carefully to all the little proprieties.

1. Thinking a bishop a model prelate because he has no stiffness or ceremony about him, but talks frankly to everybody, and puts all who approach him at their ease.

2. Thinking a bishop a model prelate because he never descends from his dignity; never forgets that he is a bishop, and keeps all who approach him in their proper places.

1. Thinking the Anglican Church service the best, because it is so decorous, solemn, and dignified.

2. Thinking the Scotch Church service the best, because it is so simple and so capable of adaptation to all circumstances which may arise.

1. Thinking an artisan a sensible, right-minded man, knowing his station, because he is always very respectful in his demeanor to the squire, and great folks generally.

2. Thinking an artisan a fine, manly, independent fellow, because he is always much less respectful in his demeanor to the squire than he is to other people.

1. Thinking it a fine thing to be a fast, reckless, swaggering, drinking, swearing reprobate: being ashamed of the imputation of being a well-behaved and (above all) a pious and conscientious young man: thinking it manly to do wrong, and washy to do right.

2. Thinking it a despicable thing to be a fast, reckless, swaggering, drinking, swearing reprobate: Thinking that it is manly to do right, and shameful to do wrong.

1. That a young man should begin his letters to his father with Honored Sir; and treat the old gentleman with extraordinary deference upon all occasions.

2. That a young man should begin his remarks to his father on any subject with, I say, Governor; and treat the old gentleman upon all occasions with no deference at all.

But indeed, intelligent reader, the swing of the pendulum is the type of the greater amount of human opinion and human feeling. In individuals, in communities, in par-

ishes, in little country towns, in great nations, from hour to hour, from week to week, from century, to century the pendulum swings to and fro. From *yes* on the one side to *no* on the other side of almost all conceivable questions, the pendulum swings. Sometimes it swings over from *yes* to *no* in a few hours or days; sometimes it takes centuries to pass from the one extremity to the other. In feeling, in taste, in judgment, in the grandest matters and the least, the pendulum swings. From Popery to Puritanism; from Puritanism back towards Popery; from imperialism to republicanism, and back towards imperialism again; From Gothic architecture to Palladian and from Palladian back to Gothic; from hooped petticoats to drapery of the scantiest, and from that backwards to the multitudinous crinoline: from crying up the science of arms to crying it down, and back; from the schoolboy telling you that his companion Brown is the jolliest fellow, to the schoolboy telling you that his companion Brown is a beast, and back again; from very high carriages to very low ones and back; from very short horsetails to very long ones and back again—the pendulum swings. In matters of serious judgment it is comparatively easy to discern the rationale of this oscillation from side to side. It is that the evils of what is present are strongly felt, while the evils of what is absent are forgotten; and so when the pendulum has swung over to A, the evils of A send it flying over to B, while when it reaches B the evils of B repel it again to A. In matters of feeling it is less easy to discover the how and why of the process: we can do no more than take refuge in the general belief that nature loves the swing of the pendulum. There are people who at one time have an excessive affection for some friend and at another take a violent disgust at him: and who (though sometimes permanently remaining at the latter point) oscillate between these positive and negative poles. You, being a sensible man, would not feel very happy if some men were loudly crying you up; for you would be very sure that in a little while they would be loudly crying you down. If you should ever happen to feel for one day an extraordinary lightness and exhilaration of spirits, you will know that you must pay for all this the price of corresponding depression—the hot fire must

be counterbalanced by the cold. Let us thank God that there are beliefs and sentiments as to which the pendulum does not swing, though even in these I have known it to do so. I have known the young girl who appeared thoroughly good and pious, who devoted herself to works of charity, and (with even an over-scrupulous spirit) eschewed vain company; and who by and by learned to laugh at all serious things, and ran into the utmost extremes of giddiness and extravagant gaiety. And not merely should all of us be thankful if we feel that in regard to the gravest sentiments and beliefs our mind and heart remain year after year at the same fixed point: I think we should be thankful if we find that as regards our favorite books and authors our taste remains unchanged; that the calm judgment of our middle age approves the preferences of ten years since, and that these gather strength as time gives them the witchery of old remembrances and associations. You enthusiastically admired Byron once, you heartily despise him now. You once thought *Festus* finer than *Paradise Lost*, but you have swung away from that. But for a good many years you have held by Wordsworth, Shakspeare, and Tennyson; and this taste you are not likely to outgrow. It is very curious to look over a volume which we once thought magnificent, entralling, incomparable, and to wonder how on earth we ever cared for that stilted rubbish. No doubt the pendulum swings quite as decidedly to your estimate of yourself as to your estimate of any one else. It would be nothing at all to have other people attacking and depreciating your writings, sermons, and the like, if you yourself had entire confidence in them. The mortifying thing is when your own taste and judgment say worse things of your former productions than could be said by the most unfriendly critic; and the dreadful thought occurs, that if you yourself to-day think so badly of what you wrote ten years since, it is probable enough that on this day ten years hence (if you live to see it) you may think as badly of what you are writing to-day. Let us hope not. Let us trust that at length a standard of taste and judgment is reached from which we shall not ever materially swing away. Yet the pendulum will never be quite arrested as to your estimate of yourself. Now

and then you will think yourself a blockhead: by and by you will think yourself very clever; and your judgment will oscillate between these opposite poles of belief. Sometimes you will think that your house is remarkably comfortable, sometimes that it is unendurably uncomfortable; sometimes you will think that your place in life is a very dignified and important one, sometimes that it is a very poor and insignificant one; sometimes you will think that some misfortune or disappointment which has befallen you is a very crushing one; sometimes you will think that it is better as it is. Ah, my brother, it is a poor, weak, wayward thing, the human heart!

You know, of course, how the pendulum of public opinion swings backwards and forwards. The truth lies somewhere about the middle of the arc it describes, in most cases. You know how the popularity of political men oscillates, from A, the point of greatest popularity, to B, the point of no popularity at all. Think of Lord Brougham. Once, the pendulum swung far to the right: he was the most popular man in Britain. Then, for many years, the pendulum swung far to the left, into the cold regions of unpopularity, loss of influence, and opposition benches. And now, in his last days, the pendulum has come over to the right again. So with lesser men. When the new clergyman comes to a country parish, how high his estimation! Never was there preacher so impressive, pastor so diligent, man so frank and agreeable. By and by his sermons are middling, his diligence middling; his manners rather stiff or rather too easy. In a year or two the pendulum rests at its proper point: and from that time onward the parson gets, in most cases, very nearly the credit he deserves. The like oscillation of public opinion and feeling exists in the case of unfavorable as of favorable judgments. A man commits a great crime. His guilt is thought awful. There is a general outcry for his condign punishment. He is sentenced to be hanged. In a few days the tide begins to turn. His crime was not so great. He had met great provocation. His education had been neglected. He deserves pity rather than reprobation. Petitions are got up that he should be let off; and largely signed by the selfsame folk who were loud-

est in the outcry against him. And instead of this fact, that those folk were keenest against the criminal, being received (as it ought) as proof that their opinion is worth nothing at all, many will receive it as proof that their opinion is entitled to special consideration. The principle of the pendulum in the matter of criminals is well understood by the Old Bailey practitioners of New York and their worthy clients. When a New Yorker is sentenced to be hanged, he remains as cool as a cucumber; for the New York law is, that a year must pass between

the sentence and the execution. And long before the year passes, the public sympathy has turned in the criminal's favor. Endless petitions go up for his pardon. Of course, he gets off. And indeed it is not improbable that he may receive a public testimonial. It cannot be denied that the natural transition in the popular feeling is from applauding a man to hanging him, and from hanging a man to applauding him.

Even so does the pendulum swing, and the world run away!

A. K. H. B.

**GARIBALDI A CANADIAN.**—A paragraph with the above heading appears in a local print, extracted from *L'Orde*, Montreal; and at the present moment, when the news of his pacific occupation of Naples engrosses universal admiration, it may be considered that any thing relating to so worthy a name may be worth embalming. The account is as follows:—

"The birthplace of the noted Sardinian general has been claimed by several countries, all making out a tolerably clear case. All disputes on this subject may, however, be considered as settled, as we give below proof sufficient to satisfy all thinking individuals that he is a Canadian. In the year 1812 a noted Iriquois chief named 'Garrabaldeh' (signifying Mighty in War), immigrated to Lower Canada. He had several sons, the eldest called Joseph, who was called by the French *habitans*, who could not pronounce the Iriquois correctly, 'Garribalde.' In the year 1820 old Garrabaldeh died, and Joseph was prevailed upon by a priest to accompany him to Italy. He was educated by this priest, and received Giuespe as a name instead of Joseph, and was taught to write his name Garibaldi. This information was received from Francis Garibalde, at present living near Sorel, with whom the great general constantly corresponds. Persons still having doubts can satisfy themselves by applying to Francis at Sorel. It can no longer be said that Canada has not produced one great man."—*Notes and Queries*.

**SANDING BEFORE THE DOOR AT MARRIAGES.**—In the town of Knutsford in Cheshire, and a radius of some miles round it, a very curious custom prevails. When a marriage takes place, on the day of its celebration all the relations and friends of the happy pair make patterns in white sand on the ground before their front doors. No particular design is observed, but it most com-

monly consists of a succession of curved lines like the scales of fish one above the other. When any well-known inhabitant is married, nearly every door in the town is thus embellished.—*Notes and Queries*.

A YOUNG officer in the army of the famous Wolfe was apparently dying of an abscess in the lungs. He was absent from his regiment on sick-leave; but resolved to rejoin it, when a battle was expected. "For," said he, "since I am given over, I had better be doing my duty; and my life's being perhaps shortened a few days, matters not." He received a shot which *pierced the abscess*, and made an opening for the discharge. He recovered, and lived to the age of eighty.—*Notes and Queries*.

In the United Service Museum (Whitehall Yard, London), are exhibited the "jaws of a shark," wide open, and enclosing a tin box.

The history of this strange exhibition is as follows: A ship, on her way to the West Indies, "fell in with" and chased a suspicious-looking craft, which had all the appearance of a slaver. During the pursuit, the chase threw something overboard. She was subsequently captured, and taken into Port Royal to be tried as a slaver.

In absence of the ship's papers and other proofs, the slaver was not only in a fair way to escape condemnation, but her captain was anticipating the recovery of pecuniary damages against his captor for illegal detention. While the subject was under discussion, a vessel came into port, which had followed closely in the track of the chase above described. She had caught a shark; and in its stomach was found a tin box, which contained the slaver's papers. Upon the strength of this evidence the slaver was condemned. The written account is attached to the box.—*Notes and Queries*.



From Macmillan's Magazine.

THE AMMERGAU MYSTERY; OR SACRED  
DRAMA OF 1860.

BY A SPECTATOR.

MOST travellers who have passed during this summer through the neighborhood of Munich, or of Innsbruck, will have heard of the dramatic representation of the history of the Passion in the village of Ober-Ammergau, which, according to custom, occurred in this the tenth year from the time of its last performance. Several circumstances have, in all probability, attracted to it a larger number of our countrymen than has been the case on former occasions. Its last celebration, in 1850, has been described in the clever English novel of "Quits." Its fame was widely spread by two Oxford travellers who witnessed it in that same year. It forms the subject of one of the chapters in the "Art Student of Munich." There is reason, therefore, to believe that many Englishmen who will have frequented the spot in this year will not be unwilling to have briefly recalled to their thoughts some of the impressions left on one who, like themselves, was an eye-witness of this remarkable scene. These reflections may be divided into those suggested by the history of the spectacle, and those suggested by the spectacle itself.\*

I. Ober-Ammergau is, as its name implies, the uppermost of two villages, situated in the *gau*, or valley of the *Ammer*, which, rising in the Bavarian highlands, falls through this valley into the wide plains of Bavaria, and joins the Isar not far from Munich. Two or three peculiarities distinguish it from the other villages of the same region. Standing at the head of its own valley, and therefore secluded from the thoroughfare of Bavaria on the one side, it is separated on the other side from the great high-road to Innsbruck by the steep pass of Ettal. Although itself planted on level ground, it is still a mountain village, and

the one marked feature of its situation is a high columnar rock, called "the Covel," apparently the origin of its ancient name, "Coveliaca." At the head of the pass is the great monastery of Ettal, founded by the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria, which, though dissolved at the beginning of this century, exercised considerable influence in giving to the secluded neighboring village its peculiarly religious or ecclesiastical character. The inhabitants of the village have been long employed on the carving and painting of wooden ornaments, toys, and sacred images, which, whilst it required from them a degree of culture superior to that of mere peasants, also gave them a familiarity with sacred subjects\* beyond what would be felt even amongst the religious peasantry of this part of Germany. Half the population are employed in these carvings. Half the houses are painted with these subjects.

In this spot, in consequence of a pestilence which devastated the surrounding villages, apparently in the train of a famine which followed on the ravages of the Thirty Years' War, a portion of the inhabitants made a vow, in 1633, that thenceforth they would represent every tenth year the Passion of Christ in a sacred play. Since that time the vow has been kept, with the slight variation that in 1680 the year was changed, so as to accord with the recurring decennial periods of the century.

Its date is important, as fixing its rise beyond the limit of the termination of the Middle Ages, with which, both in praise and blame, it is sometimes confounded. These religious mysteries, or dramatic representations of sacred subjects, existed, to a certain extent, before the Middle Ages began, as is proved by the tragedy of the Passion of Christ, by Gregory Nazianzen. They were in full force during the Middle Ages, in the form of "mysteries," or "moralities." But, almost alone of the ancient representations of sacred subjects to the outward senses, they survived the Middle Ages and the shock of the Reformation. This very vow which gave birth to the drama at Ammergau was made, as we have seen, in the middle of the seventeenth century. Through the whole of that century, or even in the next, such spec-

\* Three printed works have been used for this description, over and above the personal observation of the writer:—

1. The Songs of the Chorus, with the general Programme of the Drama, and a short preface.

2. "The Passion Play in Ober-Ammergau." By Ludwig Clarus. 2d Edition. Munich, 1860.

3. A similar shorter work by Devrient, published at Leipzig in 1851.

There was a short but complete account of the representation this year in the *Guardian* newspaper of July 25, 1860 which renders unnecessary any further consecutive description.

\* There is one other locality in Tyrol where the inhabitants are similarly employed—the Grödner Thal near Botzen.

tacles were common in the south of Germany. They received, in Northern Germany, the sanction of Luther. "Such spectacles," he is reported to have said, "often do more good, and produce more impression, than sermons." The founder of the Lutheran Church in Sweden, Archbishop Peterson, encouraged them by precept and example. The Lutheran bishops of the Danish Church composed them down to the end of the seventeenth century. In Holland, a drama of this kind is ascribed to the pen of no less a person than Grotius. Even in England, where they were naturally checked by the double cause, first, of the vast outburst of the secular drama, and then of the rise of Puritanism, they were performed in the time of the first Stuarts; and Milton's first sketch of the "Paradise Lost," as is well known, was a sacred drama, of which the opening speech was Satan's address to the sun. There was a period when there seemed to be a greater likelihood of the retention of sacred plays in England, than of the retention of painted windows, or of surplices. Relics of these mysteries, of which the sacred meaning, however, has long past away, still linger in the rude plays through which, in some parts of England, the peasants represent the story of St. George, the Dragon, and Beelzebub.

The repugnance, therefore, which has, since the close of the seventeenth century, led to the gradual suppression of these dramatic spectacles, is not to be considered a special offspring of Protestantism, any more than their origin and continuance was a special offspring of the Church of Rome. The prejudice against them has arisen from far more general causes, which have affected, if not in equal degree, yet to a large extent, the public opinion of Roman Catholic as well as of Protestant countries. If in the Protestant nations the practice died out more easily, in Roman Catholic nations it was more directly and severely denounced by the hierarchy. In 1779 a general prohibition was issued by the prince-archbishop of Salzburg, whose high authority in the country which was the chief seat of these performances gives to his decree a peculiar weight and interest. All the objections which most naturally occur to the most refined or the most Protestant mind find expression in the archbishop's manifesto—

"The mixture of sacred and profane"—"the ludicrous and disagreeable effect of the bad acting of the more serious actors, or of the intentional buffooneries of others"—"the distraction of the minds of the lower orders from the more edifying modes of instruction by sermons, Church services, and revivals"—"the temptations to intemperance and debauchery, encouraged by the promiscuous assemblages of large numbers of persons"—"the scandal brought on the Church and religion by the exposure of sacred subjects to the criticism and ridicule of freethinkers." All these and other like objections stated by the greatest prelate of Southern Germany were followed up, in 1780-1790, by vigorous measures of repression on the part of the Bavarian government and police.

Amidst the general extinction of all other spectacles of this nature, that at Ammergau still held its ground; partly from the special nature of its origin, more from the high character and culture of its inhabitants, arising out of the causes above specified. In 1810, however, the recent withdrawal of its natural protectors by the secularization of the Abbey of Ettal, and the increasing alienation of public opinion from any such religious exhibitions, induced the ecclesiastical and civil authorities at Munich to condemn its further celebration, as "being in its very idea a gross indecorum." Upon this a deputation of peasants from Ammergau went to plead their cause in the capital. The ecclesiastics were deaf to their entreaties, and bade them go home, and learn the history of the Passion not from the theatre, but from the sermons of their pastor in church. At this last gasp, the Ammergau spectacle was saved from the destruction to which the Church had condemned it by the protection of a latitudinarian king. The deputies procured an interview with Max-Joseph, the monarch whose statue in the square at Munich, which bears his name, rests on a pedestal characteristically distinguished by a bas-relief of the genius of Humanity endeavoring to reconcile a Roman Catholic prelate and a Lutheran preacher. He received them kindly, and through his permission a special exception was granted to the Ammergau Passion Play.

As a just equivalent for this permission, the directors of the spectacle undertook to

remove from it all reasonable causes of offence; and it is to this compromise between the ancient religious feelings of the locality and the exigencies of modern times that we owe the present form of the drama. Three persons were named as having contributed to this result. Weiss, an ex-monk of Ettal, and afterwards pastor of Ammergau, rewrote the dialogue and recast the plot. To him are ascribed the strict adhesion to the biblical narration, and the substitution of dramatic human passions and motives, especially in the case of Judas, for the ancient machinery of devils, and also the substitution of scenes or tableaux from the Old Testament for the allegorical personages who filled up the vacant spaces in the older representations. The music was composed by Dedler, the schoolmaster and organist. According to competent judges, though for the most part inadequate to the grandeur and elevation of the subject, it is much beyond what could be expected from so humble a source. The prologue was written by an ecclesiastical dignitary (Dom-Provost), apparently of the rank of archdeacon or rural dean, Alliani, known as the Roman Catholic translator of the Bible into German.

It is evident from this account, that, as a relic of mediæval antiquity, the Ammergau representation has but a very slight interest. It is on more general grounds—namely, of its being a serious, and perhaps the only serious existing attempt to reproduce in a dramatic form the most sacred of all events—that the spectacle can challenge our sympathy and attention.

But before proceeding to enlarge on these grounds, a few words must be devoted to the form and conditions under which the representation exists, and which can alone render its continuance justifiable or even practicable.

It is perhaps the strongest instance that could be given of the impossibility of transferring an institution from its own sphere to another. There cannot be a doubt that the same representation in London, in Paris, in Munich, would, if not blasphemous in itself, lead to such blasphemous consequences as to render its suppression a matter of absolute necessity. But, in fact, it would not be the same representation. It would be something the very opposite of that which it is. All that is most peculiar in the present per-

formance would die in any other situation. Its whole merit and character lies in the circumstance that it is a product of the locality, nearly as peculiar to it as the rocks and fruits of the natural soil.

The theatre almost tells its own story. Although somewhat more akin to ordinary dramatic representations than when the play was performed \* actually in the churchyard, it still retains all that is essential to divide it from a common stage. It is a rustic edifice of rude planks and benches, erected on the outskirts of the village. The green meadow and the circle of hills form the background—its illumination is the light of the sun poured down through the long hours of the morning on the open stage. Its effects of light and shade are the natural changes of the advancing and declining day and of the passing clouds. The stage decorations and scenery, painted in the coarsest and simplest style, as well as the construction of the theatre and the dresses of the actors, are the work of the villagers. The colors of the dresses, the attitudes of the performers, are precisely the same as the paintings and sculptures along the waysides, and on the fronts of the houses in Ammergau and the surrounding country. The actors themselves, amounting nearly to five hundred, are all inhabitants of Ammergau, and exhaust a large part of the population of the village. How far they are led to look upon their calling as an actually religious service—in what spirit they enter upon it—how far the parts are assigned according to the moral characters of the performers—are questions to which, under any circumstances, an answer would be difficult, and on which, in fact, the statements are somewhat contradictory.† The only inference which a stranger can draw is from the mode of performance, which will be best noticed as we proceed. The completely local and unprofessional nature of the transaction is further indicated by the want of any system for the reception of the influx of strangers. Nothing can exceed the friendliness and courtesy of the villagers in accommodating the guests who seek shelter under their roof—but the accommodation it-

\* As was the case till 1830.

† It is said that great care is employed in the selection of the best characters for the chief actors; that they are consecrated to their work with prayer; and that a watch over their conduct is maintained by the committee.

self is of so homely a kind as to be sure of repelling the common sight-seer or pleasure-seeker. For a similar reason, apparently, there is no possibility of procuring either a printed text of the performance, or any detailed pictorial representation of the scenes. Lastly, the spectators are equally unlike those of whom an ordinary theatrical audience is composed. Although a few of the very highest classes are present, as for example, on one occasion this year, the queen and crown prince of Bavaria, with their attendants—and although the covered seats are mostly occupied either by travellers or persons above the rank of peasants, yet more than three-fourths of those present must be of the humbler grades of life, who have come on foot, or in wagons, from localities more or less remote, to witness what, it cannot be doubted, is to them (whatever it may be to their superiors in station) an edifying and instructive spectacle. From them is derived the general atmosphere of the theatre. There is no passionate display of emotion or devotion. But their demeanor is throughout grave and respectful. Only in one or two passages, where the grotesque is evidently intended to predominate, a smile or "sensation" of mirth may be observed to run down the long lines of fixed and attentive countenances. Almost every one holds in his hand the brief summary of the drama, with the choral songs, which alone are to be purchased in print. Every part, even the most exciting, is received in dead silence; the more solemn or affecting parts, with a stillness that can be felt.

II. In such an assemblage of spectators there is a contagion of reverence, which, at least on the spot, disarms the critical or the religious objector. What is not profane to them, ought not to be profane to any one who for the moment casts his lot with them. If he has so far overcome his prejudices or his scruples as to come at all, there is nothing in the surrounding circumstances to revive or to aggravate them. He may fairly hope to receive from the spectacle before him without hindrance whatever instruction it is calculated to convey beyond the circle of those for whom it is specially intended.

(1.) The first impression which an educated man is likely to receive, is one which, as being most remote from the actual scope or intention of the spectacle, shall be men-

tioned at starting, the more so as it is suggested in the most forcible manner at the very beginning of the performance. In that vast audience of peasants, seated in the open air, to witness the dramatic exhibition of a sacred story, bound up with all their religious as well as local and national associations, and represented according to the traditional types most familiar to them, is the nearest approach which can now be seen to the ancient Athenian tragedy. Precisely such a union of rustic simplicity and high-wrought feeling—of the religious which the dramatic element—of natural scenery with simple art—was exhibited in the Dionysian theatre, and, as far as we know, has been exhibited nowhere since, through all the numerous offspring of dramatic literature which have risen from that great original source. The very appearance of the proscenium is analogous. Instead of the palace of Mycenæ, or the city of Thebes, before which the whole action of a Greek tragedy was evolved, is the palace of Pilate and of Annas, and the streets of Jerusalem, remaining unchanged through the successive scenes. And the spectacle is opened by a sight, which, if not directly copied from the one institution peculiar to the Greek drama, is so nearly parallel, as to convey an exact image of what the ancient chorus must have been. From the opposite sides of the stage advance two lines of solemn figures, ascending from childhood up to full-grown age, who range themselves, eight on each hand, at the sides of a Coryphæus, who in a loud chant announces to the audience the plan of the scene which is to follow, and then, in conjunction with his companions, sings an ode, precisely similar to those of the Athenian chorus, evoking the religious feeling of the spectators, recalling to their minds any corresponding events in the ancient Jewish history, and then moralizing on the joint effect of the whole. It would be interesting to know how far this element of the sacred drama is a conscious imitation of the Grecian chorus, or how far it is the spontaneous result of parallel circumstances. That it is, in essential points, of indigenous growth, may be inferred from the fact that its part was in earlier times performed by a personage called "the Genius of the Passion." And such a personage appears in other religious solemnities of Southern Germany.

In a quaint picture preserved at Landek (in the Tyrol) of the jubilee of the consecration of the village church, the "Genius," draped in a gay court costume, marches at the head of the procession of sacred banners and images which passes through the town and neighborhood.

(2.) In one respect, this chorus of guardian spirits is less directly connected with the religious element of the drama, than was the case with their Pagan prototypes, who actually performed their evolutions round the altar erected in front of the stage. But this difference is compensated by the uniformly sustained elevation of their choral odes, and the stately stillness with which they stand during their recital, and yet more by the curious device which the framers of the Ammergau drama have adopted to throw life into these moralizing allusions to the ancient preludes of the Christian history. As they touch on the events of the Old Testament, which appear to bear more or less nearly on the evangelical incident about to be represented, they open their ranks—the curtain of the theatre draws up, and discloses at the back of the stage the event to which the recitation refers, exhibited in a *tableau vivant*, composed of the peasants, who, down to the smallest children, remain fixed in their attitudes till the curtain falls over them, again to rise and disclose another of like kind, arranged with incredible rapidity, again expounded, and again withdrawn from view, whilst the chorus proceeds with its task of didactic exposition.

These *tableaux*, which thus form an integral part of the choral representation, are repeated at the beginning of each scene, and, though often so remotely or fancifully connected with the main action of the drama as rather to clog its progress, yet powerfully contribute towards the variety and the continuous flow of the performance. They are of the most unequal interest. Some—such as the rejection of Vashti, corresponding to the rejection of Jerusalem; the insult of Hanun to David's ambassadors, corresponding to the mockery of Christ; and the elevation of Joseph in Egypt, contrasted with the mock elevation of Christ in the hall of Pilate—are tame both in conception and execution. But others—such as the appearance of Joseph to his envious brethren, Adam laboring in the sweat of his brow, the gath-

ering of the manna in the wilderness, and the carrying of the grapes, corresponding respectively to the councils of the Sanhedrim, the Agony, the Last Supper—are at once touching and graceful, even when most childlike in ideas. In all, the immobility of the figures, sometimes consisting of hundreds, is most remarkable. In all, the choral odes derive from them a combination of pictorial and poetical representation as singular as it is effective. The fine passage in which, after the false kiss of Joab by the rock of Gibeon, the rocks of Gibeon, and through them the surrounding rocks of the Ammergau valley, are invoked to avenge the treachery of Judas, is a stroke of natural pathos, which whilst it exactly recalls the analogous allusions in the choral odes of Sophocles, could be reproduced nowhere but on a scene such as that which is here described.

(3.) After the first prologue, and the first tableau (which represents the expulsion from Paradise), begins the regular action of the drama, which, alternating with the choral odes and tableaux, proceeds with unflagging continuity (only broken by one hour's rest in the middle of the day) from eight in the morning till four in the afternoon. This untiring energy of action is, no doubt, a powerful element in sustaining the interest, and reproducing the animation of the actual story. The first part begins with the Triumphant entry, and closes with the capture in the garden of Gethsemane.

(1) The first scene introduces us at once to the chief figure in the sacred story. The wide stage, with the passages approaching it, is suddenly filled with the streaming multitude of the Triumphant entry, of all ages, chiefly masses of children, mingled together in gay costume, throwing down their garments in the way, and answering, with jubilant shouts, to a spirited ode, which, in this instance rising above the ordinary music of the rest of the lyrical pieces, is sung by the exultant chorus.\*

"Hail to Thee! hail! O David's Son!  
Hail to Thee! hail! thy Father's throne  
Is thine award.  
In God's great name Thou comest nigh,  
All Israel streams with welcome cry  
To hail its Lord.

\* This and the following literal translations are given as specimens of the lyrical parts of this rustic drama.



"Hosanna! He who dwells in heaven  
Send from above all help to Thee!  
Hosanna! He who sits on high  
Preserve Thee everlastingly!

"Blessed be the life that springs anew  
In David's house, in David's race;  
To glorious David's glorious Heir,  
All nations, bring your songs of praise!

"Hosanna! to our King's own Son,  
Sound through the heavens far and wide!  
Hosanna! on his Father's throne  
May He in majesty abide!  
Hail to Thee! hail!"

It is amidst this crowded overflow of human faces, that there appears seated on the ass, the majestic figure, known at once by the traditional costume of purple robe and crimson mantle, but still more by the resemblance to the traditional countenance of the Redeemer. Of this appearance, a gifted eye-witness in 1850 wrote that, from that moment, in her imagination, "This living representation would take the place of all pictures and statues she had ever seen, and would remain indelibly impressed on her mind forever." In every such representation, of whatever kind, the ideal person will still, to every religious and every cultivated mind, remain unapproached, and therefore unprofaned. But each will, in proportion to its excellence, exhibit some aspect of the Divine Original, in a form more impressive and more intelligible than has been obtained by any previous study or reading. That which, in the character now brought forward, most strikes the spectator as with a new sense of the truth of the Gospel narrative, is the dignity and grace with which the Christ moves, as it were, above the multitude and above the action of the drama, although bearing the chief part in it. It is felt that, from this one character is derived the true tragical interest attaching to every other person and incident in all the subsequent scenes. On the common mass of the audience the same impression appears in a less conscious, but a still more certain, form, through the increased stillness which pervades the theatre whenever this figure appears. But this pre-eminence is maintained, not by any acting, rather by the absence of acting. The clear distinctness of the words which are uttered makes them heard and felt, without the slightest approach to declamation. Every gesture implies a purpose, and yet there is not a shade of affectation. The disciples,

the priests, the money-changers, the children press around, and yet the figure of the Christ remains distinct from them all. Few have ever read the sacred narrative without a sense of the difficulty of conceiving how he, who is there described, could have passed through the world, as in it, and yet not of it. It is one advantage of the Ammergau representation that it gives us, at least, a glimpse of the possibility of such a passage through, yet above, the world.

To dwell on all the details in which this idea is carried out would be superfluous to those who have seen the spectacle, and unintelligible to those who have not. It is enough here to say, that amidst all the changing scenes which follow, and of which some notice will be taken as we proceed, the identity of character in the first appearance is never lost.

(2) As the Christ is the character in the drama, where the effect is sustained by the absence of all art and the independence of all the agitations of human passion, so the next most important character is that on which most effort has been bestowed, and in which the play of imagination and dramatic invention has been allowed the freest scope. It would be a curious inquiry to ascertain how far the conception of Judas Iscariot is traditional, or how far derived from the fancy of the last revisers of the drama. It is a certain and an instructive fact, that in the modernization of the spectacle this internal development of motives has taken the place of the demons which the earlier machinery reproduced in outward shape as Judas' companions. This accommodation to what may have been thought modern prejudice is in every sense as it should be: it is not only a more refined, but a more scriptural representation of the history of the traitor; and the coincidence of the two, as thus brought out in the drama, is well worthy of the attention of the theological student. But the particular mode in which the motives of Judas are conceived is peculiar, and must be stated at length.

He is conspicuous amongst the apostles, not only from the well-known red beard and yellow robe (as of envy), with which he always appears, but from his prominent position, always pressing forward even beyond Peter himself, the restless, moving, active, busy personage of the whole group. The

scene of the breaking of the box of precious ointment is worked to the utmost. The silent profusion of the Magdalene and the eager economy of Judas are contrasted from the two sides of the stage in startling opposition. From this moment a monomania, a fixed idea of replacing the three hundred pence, takes possession of his mind. He shakes his empty money-bag. He recurs to the subject with a pertinacity bordering, and apparently meant to border, on the ludicrous. The thirty pieces of silver are represented as an equivalent for the loss. He is filled with nervous apprehensions as to the destitution of himself and his companions, if their Master should imperil himself at Jerusalem. In this state he is left alone to his own thoughts, and, in a scene perhaps too elaborately drawn out, he rushes to and fro between the distractions of his worse and better nature; until the balance is turned by the deputation from the chief priests suddenly entering, playing on his delusion, getting round him, and entrapping him into the fatal compact. The absorbing passion is brought out forcibly once more, when, with a greediness of the actual coin, truly Oriental, and (if not suggested by some travelled or learned prompter) wonderfully resembling the Oriental reality, he counts over the silver pieces in the presence of the high priests. But the compunctions of conscience are never wholly repressed. The deadness of the grasp with which he takes the hands of his accomplices in the compact is very expressive. The shuffling agitation during the Last Supper; the outbreak of remorse before the Sanhedrim; the frenzy into which he is goaded by their calm indifference; the fury with which he offers back the money to each, and with which he finally flings the bag behind him and rushes out, all have the effect of exhibiting in strong relief the return of a better mind recovering from a dreadful illusion. With this is mingled something of the ludicrousness as well as of the horror of insanity; and when, at the last, he clambers up the fatal tree, tearing off branches as he reaches the top, and the curtain falls\* to veil

his end, it is probably as much from this admixture of the grotesque, as from a sense that the villain has got his due, that the commoner part of the audience is roused for once to an incongruous expression of derision. In one instance, at least, of a more thoughtful German Catholic of the middle classes, the representation of the strength of Judas' repentance left the impression that "we have no right to say that Judas was lost."

No other personage is so lifted above the incidents of the drama as to claim a separate notice. But if none of them rise above the general action, none of them fall below it, with the exception of the female characters. In former times, as in the ancient classical drama, these characters were all sustained by men; and the failure of the present practice well illustrates the reasonableness, almost the necessity, of the ancient usage. Not to speak of the inferiority of the conception of their parts—perhaps in themselves more difficult—the inadequacy of any ordinary female voice to fill the immense theatre in the open air is painfully felt; and the fullness and distinctness of the speeches of the men brings out forcibly the contrast of the thin, shrill voices of the women who have to act the parts, happily less prominent in the drama that might have been expected, of the Virgin Mary, the Magdalene, and Martha. Possibly, the peculiar accent of German women, especially in the lower classes, may conduce to this result on English ears, beyond what would be the case with their own countrymen.

(3) In accordance with this prominence of the character of Judas, the one event round which the whole of this portion of the drama revolves, perhaps out of proportion to its place in the sacred narrative, is the Betrayal. The first preparation for it occurs in the first scene of the entry into the Temple, through the intervention of an element, the importance of which must be ascribed to the fancy of the framers of the drama. It would almost seem, as if with a view of bringing home the moral of the sacred history to the minds of the humbler classes, for whom the representation is chiefly designed, an intentional emphasis had been given to the incident of turning the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. The incident itself is brought out with much force in the loud and solemn

\* It is a curious fact, and confirms the remarks made above, that the circumstances of Judas' death have been, and are gradually being, softened down in the representation. First, the devils who carried him off were dropped; then the swine devouring his entrails; next, in 1850, his death was indicated only by a piercing shriek as the curtain fell; now, in 1860, the curtain falls, and the shriek is not heard.

utterance of these words, "My house is called a house of prayer"—the sudden overturning of the table of the money-changers—the live pigeons flying off into the open air above the heads of the spectators—the wild confusion and dispersion of the traffickers themselves. Immediately afterwards are heard their cries of "Revenge, revenge!" and throughout the subsequent scenes they are made the malignant and ingenious agents between the Sanhedrim and Judas.

(4) A large proportion of this part of the drama is occupied by the debates in the Sanhedrim. In these debates, a larger scope for the dialogue is given than in any other part; and from this circumstance, as well as from the difficulty of following in a foreign tongue arguments not founded on familiar facts, or couched in familiar language, the length to which these debates are carried is perhaps the only part of the spectacle which produces an impression of wearisomeness. But for the common spectators this interlude, as it may be called, of ordinary life and speech may be a seasonable relief; and to the stray visitor there are two or three points exhibited in these scenes too remarkable to escape notice. He cannot fail to be struck by the prominence (not indeed beyond the strict warrant of Scripture) given to the fact that the catastrophe of the Passion was brought about by the machinations of the priesthood: that Christ was the victim of the passions, not of the people, or of the rulers, but of the hierarchy. The strange costume, as well as the vehement and senseless reiterations of the arguments and watchwords of the leaders, present (unintentionally, it may be, but if so, the more impressively), the appearance of a hideous caricature of a great ecclesiastical assembly. The huge mitres growing out into horns on the heads of the high priests present a grotesque compound of devils and bishops. The incessant writing and bustling agitation of the scribes are like satires on high dignitaries immersed in official business and intrigue. What may be the parts assigned to the lesser personages in the Sanhedrim it would be impossible to describe without the opportunity of more closely following the thread of the dialogue. But Annas and Caiaphas stand out distinct. Caiaphas is the younger, more impetuous, more active conspirator. Annas, clothed in white, and with a long white beard, represents the

ancient, venerable depository of the Jewish traditions. He "rejoices that he has lived to see this day, when the enemy of the customs of his fathers will be cut off. He feels himself new-born." He gives to the traitor the assurance "that the name of Judas shall be famous forever in the annals of his country." The whole scene suggests, in its own strange fashion, that of the council in Milton's Pandemonium. But, as by the great poet in the fallen archangels, so in the apostate priests, there is kept up by the simple dramatist and performers of Ammergau, something of the dignity and grandeur of a former and higher state.

(5) The scenes which represent the Feast in the house of Simon, and the Journey from Bethany to Jerusalem, require few remarks. The solemn, and, in a manner, regal, appearance of the Christ, surrounded and fenced off by the constant circle of the Twelve, each with his staff in his hand, recalls what doubtless was one main peculiarity of the journeys recorded in the Gospel narrative. The parting from the virgin mother and the friends of Bethany on the way to Jerusalem, is touching and simple. It forms one of the few exceptions to the failure of the female parts before noticed, and it is accompanied by one of the most affecting of the choral odes, on the search of the beloved one in the Canticles.

"Where is my love departed,  
The fairest of the fair?  
Mine eyes gush out with burning tears  
Of love, and grief, and care.

"Ah! come again! ah! come again!  
To this deserted breast.  
Beloved one! oh! why tarriest thou  
Upon my heart to rest?

"By every path, on every way,  
Mine eyes are strained to greet thee;  
And with the earliest break of day  
My heart leaps forth to meet thee!

"Beloved one! ah! what woe is me!  
My heart how rent with pain!"—  
"O friend beloved—oh, comfort thee,  
Thy friend will come again.

"Soon to thy side he comes once more  
For whom thy soul a while must yearn;  
No cloud shall ever shadow more  
The joy of that return."

(6) The scene of the Last Supper is the one of which the effect on the audience is the most perceptible, and of which every detail most firmly rivets itself in the memory. From the first appearance of the band of

sacred guests at the table in the upper chamber, till its dispersion after the joint recitation of a prayer or hymn, the whole multitude of spectators is hushed into breathless silence, deepening into a still profounder stillness, at the moment when the sacred words, so solemn in the ears of any Christian audience, introduce the institution of the sacrament. There is probably no point in the spectacle where a religious mind would naturally be more shocked than by this imitation of the holiest of Christian ordinances. There is none, however, where this feeling is more immediately relieved, both by the manner of the imitation, and by the demeanor of the spectators. To a critical eye, two or three points of special instruction emerge from this strange mixture of dramatic and devotional interest. Although the aspect of the actual historical event is in this, as in all pictorial representations, marred by the substitution of the modern attitude of sitting for the ancient one of reclining, yet the scene reproduces, with a force beyond many doctrinal expositions, the social character of the occasion out of which the Christian sacrament arose. Nor is there any thing (or hardly any thing) in the form in which that first origin of the sacrament is represented, which attaches itself peculiarly to the special tenets of the particular Church, under whose auspices this drama has been preserved. The attitude of the apostles in receiving, and of their Master in giving, the bread and wine of the supper, far more nearly resembles that of a Presbyterian than of a Roman Catholic ritual. The cup is studiously given, as well as the bread, to all who are present. The dignity and simplicity of the chief figure suffices to raise the whole scene to its proper pitch of solemnity. One only slight interruption to the complete gravity of the transaction, is the sudden flight of Judas from the supper, which, like most of the details of his character, blends, as has been already observed, something of the grotesque even with the most sublime and tragical parts of the story.

(7) The wild and touching prelude of the chorus to the scene of the capture in the garden of Gethsemane has been already noticed, and is, with its living accompaniments, amongst the most expressive parts of that class of representation in the spectacle. The scene itself is, and, perhaps, must of neces-

sity be, unequal to that which it endeavors to reproduce. The slow and painful ascent of the rocky side of the garden, the threefold departure, and the threefold return, is a faithful attempt to recall the heaviness and the sorrow of that hour. But of the remainder of the scene it is difficult not to feel that it would have been better if all had been left, as some parts are left, merely to the imagination of the spectators, however welcome to a rude taste may be the literal exhibition of what is in fact incapable of being exhibited. Not so, however, the sudden change of the stillness of the scene by the entrance of the armed troop. This, with the gradual closing in of the soldiers on their victim, and the melting away of the disciples on the right hand and on the left, leaving their Master alone (for the first time from the beginning of the action) in the centre of armed strangers, makes the fitting, as it is the truly historical, climax to this first act of the drama.

(4) As the first part of the spectacle converges to the Betrayal, so the second part, with more unquestionable propriety, converges to the Crucifixion. The whole action of the representation changes with the change of the position of the Chief Character; and, in this respect, it may be said that its dramatic interest is lessened. That character, although still the centre of the movement, is now entirely passive. The majesty is sustained, even more remarkably than in the first part, but it is almost exclusively the majesty of endurance, and probably the fact of the gospel narrative which the representation here most deeply impresses on the spectator, is that of the long, immovable, almost unbroken silence, which, with very few exceptions, is the only expression, if one may use the word, of the Sufferer, in all the various scenes through which he is hurried, driven, insulted, tortured. This immobility of the Central Figure, added to the circumstance that the groups which follow are often directly copies either of well-known pictures or of the sculptured representations on Calvaries, gives to this second part much more the appearance of a succession of scenes in painting or sculpture than of actual life. For this reason, there are fewer points than in the former part requiring remark. Such as there are shall be briefly noticed.

( ) The long and constant bandyings of

the trial to and fro from court to court are powerfully delineated. How much the brief narrative of the gospel gains by some such development of its meaning may be best understood by reading the admirable attempt at such a literal development in Dean Milman's "History of Christianity." What that distinguished poet and scholar has achieved by the art of his pen, the drama of Ammergau has, in its rude way, attempted in its living actions and figures.

(2) A new class of actors is here introduced, in whose part it is more difficult than elsewhere to imagine the feasibility of maintaining a proper reverence of sentiment; namely, the soldiers and executioners. Nothing can be more natural than their roughness and insensibility; but of all the scenes of the transaction, these are the most painful to witness. The chief possibility of reconciling them to the devotional feelings of the audience and the actors must be found in the pictorial character of these latter scenes, which has just been noticed. To the critical observer they have the merit of exhibiting in the most graphic forms the way in which the hard realities and brutalities of life must on this occasion, as always, have come into the most abrupt and direct contact with the holiest and tenderest of objects, which, by a stretch of imagination, we usually contrive to keep apart from them.

(3) Of these scenes one of the most effective, and (from the absence of the Christ during the chief part) the least offensive, is that in the hall of Caiaphas, where the soldiers and the maids of the palace light the fire and interchange rude jests with each other about the recent events; whilst Peter and John are seen stealing in and mixing themselves with the crowd. Then comes the gradual absorption of Peter into the conversation round the fire; the manner in which he is entangled by his own forward obtrusiveness; the quick succession of questions, rejoinders, retorts, and denials; the sudden pang as his Master enters, and turns directly upon him a fixed, silent look before passing on with the armed band, leaving Peter alone on the stage. The rapid passage across the stage of the two successive solitary penitents—Peter and Judas—is full of instruction even to those who have heard the contrast drawn out in hundreds of sermons.

(4) A character now appears, which, as it

is conceived by the Ammergau dramatists, is, in dignity and gravity, though in no other particular, second only to that of the Christ. This is Pilate. There are many of the more subtle traits of the Governor's character, as they appear in the Gospel narrative,—his perplexity, his anxiety, his scepticism, his superstition,—which the spectacle has failed to reproduce. The dialogue is less impressive than it should be; the question, "What is truth?" is cut short by the entrance of a messenger who calls him out, as if by an external cause to account for his discontinuance of the conversation. But it is remarkable to observe the true historical tact of nature with which these half-educated peasants have caught the grandeur of the Roman magistrate. Every movement of himself, and even of his attendants, is intended to produce the impression of the superiority of the Roman justice and the Roman manners, to the savage, quibbling, vulgar clamors of the Jewish priests and people. His noble figure, as he appears on the balcony of his house, above the mob—his gentle address—the standard of the Roman empire behind him—the formal reading of the sentence—the solemn breaking asunder of the staff to show that the sentence has been delivered—are bold, though not too bold, delineations of the better side of the judge and of the law, under which the catastrophe of the sacred history was accomplished.

Herod, on the other hand, is depicted as a mere Oriental king, furious at the silence of his prisoner, and at his own inability to make any thing out of the case.

(5) The chief priests still continue to take the leading part in the transaction, which they have sustained through its earlier stages. One element in their conduct is brought out with considerable truth of nature as well as of history; namely, the spirit and zeal with which, as fanatical ringleaders, they conspire, and then disperse in various directions to rouse the Jewish populace, which is represented as then, and by these means, turned for the first time into the course of furious hostility which demanded the Crucifixion.

In this part of the story immense stress is laid on the preference of Barabbas. In the choral ode which precedes the scene of the choice between the two prisoners, there is a striking combination of the choral and dramatic elements of the representation. The



cries of the populace for Barabbas are heard behind the scenes, to which the Chorus replies with a mixture of irony and remonstrance.

- People.* Let Barabbas be  
From his bonds set free.  
*Chorus.* Nay, let Jesus be  
From his bonds set free.  
Wildly sounds the murderers' cry!  
*People.* Crucify him! crucify!  
*Chorus.* Behold the man! behold the man!  
Oh! say what evil hath He done!  
*People.* If thou testest this man free  
Caesar's friend thou canst not be.  
*Chorus.* Jerusalem! Jerusalem! woe, woe to thee!  
This blood, O Israel, God shall claim  
from you!  
*People.* His blood on us and on our children  
be!  
*Chorus.* Yea, upon you and on your children  
too.

In the actual release of Barabbas, the contrast is heightened by the assignment of the part of Barabbas to a person who is, or is made to look, the image of a low, vulgar ruffian; and as the two stand side by side, the majesty and patience of the one is set forth by the undignified, eager impatience of the other, shuffling to be released at the earliest moment.

(<sup>6</sup>) As the plot advances, the reproduction of the well-known paintings on the subject becomes more apparent. The "Ecce Homo" is an evident imitation of the picture of Correggio. The Crucifixion, without perhaps specially resembling any one representation, is so much more like a picture than a reality that its painful effect is thereby much diminished. The descent from the Cross is an exact copy of Rubens' famous painting.\* Whatever living action is carried on through these last scenes lies, almost entirely in the rough by-play, already described, of the soldiers and executioners. Only when the motionless silence of the Central Figure is broken by the few words from the Cross, is the illusion dispelled which might make us think that we were looking on a sculptured ivory image. The actual appearance of the Crucifixion is produced by mechanical contrivances, through which the person is sustained on the Cross with no further effort than that (which is no doubt considerable) of the extension of the arms.

\* The engravings of these pictures in the inns, even of remote parts of the Tyrol, render the knowledge of these pictures less remarkable than it would otherwise be.

The apprehension or the knowledge of this effort gives a sense of real anxiety to the scene, which lasts for upwards of twenty minutes—and also of real care, to the mode in which the arms are gradually released from their outstretched position, and the body is slowly let down from the Cross by the long drapery with which, as in Rubens' picture, it is swathed and suspended as it descends. A breathless silence, succeeded by a visible relief, pervades the vast audience through the whole of this protracted representation.

(<sup>7</sup>) With the entombment, the dramatic portion of the spectacle properly ends. The scene which follows, and which is intended to represent the resurrection from the tomb, in the presence of the watching soldiers, is, as might be expected from the nature of the subject, wholly incongruous. And the brief scenes of the disappointment of the chief priests, of the arrival of Peter and John at the tomb, and of the appearance to the Magdalene, are unequal to the magnitude of the interest with which they are charged, and are evidently felt to be so by the audience, who, though still retaining their respectful demeanor, now begin very gradually to disperse. There is still, however, the impressive conclusion, when the chorus, laying aside the black robes, which they had assumed during the previous scene of the Crucifixion, come forth, and in the presence of a final tableau, embracing a vast mass of figures, in a representation of the heroes and saints of both Old and New Testament united in one, close the spectacle with a hymn of triumph.

- "Conquering and to conquer all  
Forth He comes in all His might;  
Slumbering but a few short hours  
In the grave's funereal night.  
"Sing to Him in holy psalms!  
Strew for Him victorious palms!  
Christ, the Lord of life, is risen!  
Sound, O heavens, with anthems meet!  
Earth, with songs the conqueror greet!  
Hallelujah! Christ is risen!  
"Praise Him who now on high doth reign!  
Praise to the Lamb that once was slain!  
Hallelujah!  
Praise Him who, glorious from the grave,  
Comes forth triumphantly to save!  
Hallelujah!  
"Praise be to him who conquers death,  
Who once was judged at Gabbatha!  
Praise be to him who heals our sins,  
Who died for us on Golgotha!

"Let Israel's harp with gladdening sound  
Joy through every spirit pour;  
He with the conqueror's crown is crowned,  
Who died and lives for evermore.

"Oh, praise Him, all ye hosts of heaven!  
To him all praise and glory pour!  
Praise, glory, honor, power, and might,  
Through ages of eternity!"

III. So ends the Ammergau spectacle. Its fourteenth and last representation was on the 16th of September, and it will not recur till 1870.

What may be the religious or devotional feelings awakened by this spectacle, in the various classes who are present, it would be impossible to determine. What they were intended to be is well expressed in the close of the short preface to the choral songs, which almost every spectator held in his hand: "May all who come to see how the Divine man trod this path of sorrows, to suffer as a sacrifice for sinful humanity, well consider that it is not sufficient to contemplate and admire the Divine original; that we ought much rather to make this Divine spectacle an occasion for converting ourselves into His likenesses, as once the saints of the Old Testament were His fitting foreshadows. May the outward representation of His sublime virtues rouse us to the holy resolution to follow Him in humility, patience, gentleness, and love. If that which we have seen in a figure, becomes to us life and reality, then the vow of our pious ancestors will have received its best fulfilment; and then will that blessing not fail to us, with which God once rewarded the faith and the trust of our fathers."

But it may be worth while to sum up the reflections of a more general and intellectual character, which arise in the mind of an educated stranger who may have been present.

(1.) He can hardly fail to have an increased idea of the dramatic nature of the sacred story, which, amidst all the imperfections of this rustic spectacle, is brought out in so unmistakable a form. It is a saying, quoted from Lavater, that as there is no more dramatic work than the Bible, so the history of the Passion is the drama of dramas. That this characteristic peculiarity of the sacred narrative should thus stand the test, is one of the many proofs to those who will receive it rightly, of the all-embracing power and excellence of the Bible itself.

(2.) Again, if he be a sound Protestant, it cannot but be a matter of theological instruction and gratification, to have observed how entirely scriptural, and even in a certain sense unconsciously Protestant, is this representation of the greatest of all events. The biblical account controls the whole spectacle. The words of the Bible are studiously used. Only one of the numerous tableaux—that of Tobias and his parents—is drawn from the Apocrypha. Only one slight incident (that of the woman offering the handkerchief on the way to Golgotha), is taken from ecclesiastical tradition. Even in cases where the popular sentiment of the Roman Catholic Church would naturally come into play, it has not penetrated here. The Virgin appears not more prominently or more frequently than the most rigid Protestant would allow. In the scenes after the Resurrection, the biblical account of the appearance to the Magdalene, not the traditional one of the appearance to the Virgin, is carefully preserved. The forcible representation of the predominant guilt of the Jewish hierarchy, and of the simplicity of the Last Supper (as already noticed), are directly suggestive of the purest Protestant sentiments.

(3.) Nor are there wanting further indications how a natural representation of the sacred history rises into a higher and wider sphere than is contained within the limits of any particular sect or opinion. The exhibition of the sacrifice on Calvary, whether in the actual representation, or in the didactic expositions of the chorus, is (with the possible exception of a very few expressions) the ancient, scriptural, orthodox view, not deformed by any of the more modern theories on the subject.

The philosophical as opposed to the mediæval conception of human character in the case of Judas has been already noticed. Of the two great virtues which find so little favor with sectarian polemics, the praise of *truth* is the special subject of one of the choral odes; and the need of *justice*, especially justice in high places, forms the special theme of another.

There are those, it may be hoped, to whom it is a pleasure and not a pain to reflect that a representation of such a subject should not contain what is distinctive of any peculiar sect of Christendom; but, as if by a

kind of necessity, should embrace and put forward what is common to all alike.

(4.) Again, any person interested in national religious education must perceive the effect of such a lifelike representation of the words and facts of the Bible in bringing them home to the minds, if not the hearts, of the people. To those who believe that the Bible, and especially the Gospel history, has a peculiarly elevating and purifying effect, beyond any other religious or secular books, it will be a satisfaction to know that thousands of German peasants have carried away, graven on their memories, not a collection of mediæval or mythological legends, but the chief facts and doctrines both of the Old and New Testament, with an exactness such as would be vainly sought in the masses of our poorer population, or even, it may be said, with some of our clergy. We may fairly object to the mode of instruction, but as to its results we must rejoice that what is given is not chaff but wheat. Nor need the most fastidious taste reject the additional light thrown by this representation on the most sacred page of the book which all Christians are bound to study, and which every clergyman is bound to expound to his flock, though by totally different means from those employed at Ammergau.

(5.) For, finally, any intelligent spectator at this scene will feel it to be a signal example of the infinite differences which, even with regard to subjects of the most universal interest, divide the feelings and thoughts of nations and Churches from each other, and of the total absurdity and endless mischief of transposing to one phase of mind what belongs exclusively to another. We Englishmen are not more reverential than an audience of Bavarian or Tyrolese rustics. Probably we are much less so. But, from long engrained habit, from the natural reserve and delicacy of a more northern, and a more civilized people, from the association of those outward exhibitions of sacred subjects with a Church disfigured by superstition and intolerance, we naturally regard as impious what these simple peasants regard as devout and edifying. The more striking

is the superstition, the more salutary its effect on those for whom it is intended; the more forcibly we may be ourselves impressed in witnessing it, so much the more pointedly instructive does the lesson become, of the utter inapplicability of such a performance to other times and places than its own. Sacred pictures, sacred sculpture, sacred poetry, sacred music, sacred ritual, must all be judged by the same varying standard. The presence or the absence of any one of these is reverent or irreverent, according to the intention of those who use it, and the disposition of those for whom it is intended. An organ would be as shocking a profanation of worship in Scotland or in Russia as a crucifix in England, or as the absence of a crucifix in the Tyrol or in Sweden. Every one knows what disastrous consequences have flowed from the attempt of certain High Church clergy to force upon the population of Wapping a ritual which, to those who introduced it, was doubtless symbolical of reverence and devotion, but in those who were to receive it, awakened only a frenzy of ribaldry, fanaticism, and profaneness. The case of the Ammergau mystery decisively proves the futility of all such forced and incongruous adaptations. This, beyond all dispute, is an institution which cannot be transplanted without provoking sentiments the exact opposite of those which it excites in its own locality. Even an extension or imitation of it in the country of its birth would go far to ruin its peculiar character. The Archbishop of Salzburg was probably as right in his general prohibition of such spectacles in Southern Germany, as the King Max-Joseph in his permission of this particular one. Its inaccessible situation, its rude accompaniments, its rare decennial recurrence, are its best safeguards. Happily the curiosity which the representation of this year may have roused will have been laid to rest long before its next return; and the best wish that can be offered for its continuance is, that it may remain alone of its kind, and that it may never attract any large additional influx of spectators from distant regions or uncongenial circles.

From Chambers's Journal.

# SCIENCE AND ARTS FOR SEPTEMBER.

ONE of the chief subjects talked about since the House of Commons broke up for their holidays, is the new project for bringing the electric telegraph into general use within the limits of London. Our skyward view is indeed intersected by lines of wire stretched in sundry directions; but as it costs from £60 to £70 a mile to set up a wire, the number of persons who are willing to add that amount to their business expenses is but few. Another objection is the necessity for having a clerk specially trained to manipulate the instrument and send the messages. The new project includes the formation of a company who, as yet in their preliminary state, hope, to render the telegraph available to all classes of Londoners at a reasonable rate. They propose to lay a bundle of perhaps a hundred wires underground along some of the principal thoroughfares and through the parks, which will be more convenient and economical than carrying them through the air; and from these buried wires, lines will be carried across the house-tops wherever required. Still further to facilitate operations, they will hire houses in suitable situations as supports for the air-lines, and build proper places on the roofs for the protection and attachment of the wires; and having done this, the houses will be sublet, subject to access by the telegraph company. This arrangement will enable them to sell the exclusive use of a wire for one-sixth of the charge which must, under present circumstances, be incurred. Beside this, they offer an important advantage by making use of Professor Wheatstone's instruments, which, by the simplicity of their construction, obviate certain serious objections made against the use of the telegraph on the score of expense. One of these instruments is described as the automatic telegraph; the other, the universal telegraph. The latter is the most useful for short distances—say, one to three miles—and it is so easy of manipulation, that any intelligent person may send a message by it, though previously untrained to telegraphic manipulation, for it is merely a small circular box, showing all round its edge the extremities of a series of keys which operate similarly to the keys of a pianoforte. Each key is inscribed with a

letter of the alphabet, and ten others are set apart for the numerals 1 to 9 and 0—hence it is easy to send a message by touching key after key with the finger according to the letters which spell the words. The receiver of the message reads it off from a small dial-plate, of the size of an ordinary timepiece, on which the hand points to the several letters as fast as they are touched by the distant sender; and if the sender knows how to spell, there seems but little chance of making a mistake.

The current which actuates each of the above-mentioned telegraphs is magnetic, not galvanic, hence no batteries are required, and the instruments are in consequence surprisingly portable. The emperor of the French used them at the battle of Solferino; and as one man can carry the pair of instruments, and another can push the truck which bears the reel of wire, it will be seen that this simplified form of telegraph is well adapted for field-service. At Chatham, on one occasion, twenty-five fuses were simultaneously fired at two miles' distance by this little instrument. Ere long, we shall hear of its having been taken into use by volunteer rifle-shooters, by surveyors, by police authorities, and the coast-guard. A nobleman, who resides five miles from Dundee, sends his orders to tradesmen in the town by one of these instruments. The mercantile portion of the community may now avail themselves of the telegraph to any extent. Our government authorities are using the instrument at home, and sending it out to the colonies; it is in daily use at the London Docks, and at docks on the Surrey side of the Thames. In the West India Docks, a different system is used, which involves an annual expense of £200 for a royalty on batteries, and the employment of special clerks. The line from the Houses of Parliament to the queen's printers, in Fleet Street, is worked by this new telegraph, and any M. P. may, if he pleases, spell out his message for himself without taking the clerk into his confidence. What a convenience it will be when messages can be sent at small cost and at any moment to all parts of London! Take one particular only; the possibility of inquiring before setting out whether the person you wish to see is at home or not—and in this one we see a saving of time to thousands of persons every day.

To pass to another subject: it is with no little pleasure that we invite attention to the formation of a *Society for Acclimatization of Animals, Birds, Fishes, Insects, and Vegetables*, for, if properly guided and supported such a society may work and co-operate beneficially, not only for England, but for every country of the globe. We have repeatedly noticed in the columns of this *Journal* the labors of the *Société d'Acclimatization* of France, and we hope to aid ere long in making known the proceedings of the society on this side the channel. For the present, we announce that they start with a distinguished list of patrons, and a council which includes the names of naturalists well known for their love of science—Tegetmeier, Waterhouse, Hawkins, with the Hon. Grantley F. Berkley as vice-president; and Mr. F. T. Buckland as secretary, whose studious activity in behalf of natural history has won him the favor both of savans and of the public.

Of course, members are wanted: membership for life may be secured by a donation of £10, or yearly, by a subscription of £2, 2s., payable to the secretary at the offices 346 Strand, London. The purposes of the society, as set forth in the prospectus, are: "The introduction, acclimatization, and domestication of all innoxious animals, birds, fishes, insects, and vegetables, whether useful or ornamental. The perfection, propagation, and hybridization of races newly introduced or already domesticated. The spread of indigenous animals, etc., from parts of the United Kingdom where they are already known, to other localities where they are not known. The procurement, whether by purchase, gift, or exchange of animals, etc., from British colonies and foreign countries. The transmission of animals, etc., from England to her colonies and foreign parts, in exchange for others sent thence to the society. The holding of periodical meetings, and the publication of reports and transactions, for the purpose of spreading the knowledge of acclimatization, and for inquiry into the causes of success or failure." The purposes look promising. We think them especially worthy the attention of landowners, as parks, moorlands, plains, woodlands, farms, poultry-yards, gardens, ponds, rivers, and the sea-shore may become more profitable, useful, or agreeable through the operations of this society.

Encouraging proof of what can be accomplished is shown in the interesting letter addressed to the *Times* by Mr. Wilson, who is known as the Australian acclimatizer; and we cannot conclude our notice of the new society better than by a brief summary of his information. He tells us that nearly three hundred llamas and alpacas have been conveyed from South America to New South Wales and the colony of Victoria, and as there are nine hundred and eighty thousand square miles of grazing-ground in our antipodal possessions, there is little doubt but that the animals will find localities suited to their habits. What a prospect is thereby opened of abundant export of llama and alpaca wool within the next twenty years, as well as of merino, for which Australia is already famous! The alpacas have multiplied since their arrival in the colony; deer and hares have also been introduced; and encouraged by this success, Mr. Wilson and his friends made an attempt to introduce the salmon into the colonial rivers. They raised £600 and sent out thirty thousand ova bedded in gravel, and with a stream of ice water constantly flowing over them; but the vessel, though a clipper, had a tedious voyage, the ice failed, and the ova consequently perished. This failure, however, is to be taken as experience, and an indication of the amount of difficulty to be overcome, and the attempt will be renewed; and as a nursery is already prepared in one of the southern rivers of Tasmania, we may perhaps hear, within the next five years, that the Tasmanians are eating native salmon. Meanwhile, the carp and goldfish have been introduced into the lagoons and "water holes," and from Mauritius a supply of the gouramier, a fish originally from China, and described as "the very best fresh-water pond-fish in the world." The first experiment with this last, however, proved a failure.

English pheasants are now so numerous in Australia that the colonists can breed as many as they want; the same will shortly be the case with partridges: the peacock is acclimatized, and now breeds wild in the bush; and English song-birds have taken so kindly to their southern habitation, that many a settler may fancy himself at home once more as he listens to their warbling. There appears to be but little difficulty in the transport of birds, and Mr. Wilson



says: "I have good hopes of taking out every English song-bird of any value, one after another, and giving each one a chance of showing how far it is capable of adapting itself to a new country, and a new set of circumstances." There is at least one songster which the colonists may send us in return, the magpie or pied crow, which has "a note so rich, and wild, and clear, that it would be a great addition to an English park." The kangaroos brought to the Zoölogical Gardens have bred; and the black swan appears to thrive as well in our rivers as in those of Australia.

If, as Geoffroy St. Hilaire says, there are one hundred and forty thousand different kinds of animals in the world, the resources for interchange are indeed great; and England, with her many colonies and widespread commerce is, of all countries, the one best fitted to take the lead in carrying out the views of the Acclimatization Society. We see from the foregoing particulars how much can be accomplished on a small scale by private enterprise. How much more, then, when every colony and every civilized country shall be co-operating in the work! And as regards the actual transport, we have Mr. Wilson's testimony as to the way in which difficulties are lessened. "Whatever I have requested," he says, "has been granted most cheerfully by all to whom I have applied, and—excluding, of course, the alpaca and salmon, which involved very considerable space and expense—I have never been asked for one farthing for freight or passage for any of the things I have sent out or received in return. Messrs. Gibbs, Bright, and Co., James Baines and Co., the Peninsular and Oriental Company, Messrs. Green, and, above all, Messrs. Wigram, have vied with one another in their willingness to assist, and have laid me under deep obligations by their hearty co-operation. And so with captains, mates, etc. Every sailor likes a pet, and my pheasants, fish, and song-birds have been nursed on board these ships with a tenderness worthy of Miss Nightingale." Let us add to this, that equal willingness has been shown by individuals in this country to receive and nurse foreign birds and animals through their first stage of acclimatization. Lord Hill in particular, has shown in his breeding-grounds at Hawkstone Park, Shropshire, how the strangers

may be successfully accustomed to the new circumstances.

A few items of news are worthy of notice as interesting to geographers: Messrs. Grant and Speke are on their way to, if not already arrived, in North-eastern Africa, there to accomplish new explorations. A government steam-sloop, the *Pioneer*, of three hundred and fifty horse-power, and especially fitted for service in Dr. Livingstone's expedition, has sailed for the Zambesi. Hayti is commencing to bore artesian wells in her droughty districts. Important to mariners is the result of Captain Denham's survey of Eastern Australia, in the *Herald*: one of his special objects was to examine the region of the great reefs for a safe and navigable channel in that dangerous latitude; and it is now announced by authority, "that a ship from the southward has only to be placed in 24° S. 157° E., and a clear passage of one hundred and fifty miles wide, free of current, with a flowing south-east trade-wind, will lie before her for the eleven hundred miles to the Raine Island entrance to Torres' Strait." The courses which she will have to steer through all the route are clearly defined; hence this discovery is one that will facilitate the fast increasing traffic along that remote eastern route.

A writing instrument for blind persons has been recently invented by the Rev. G. Wardlaw, M. A. residing at Helensburgh, Dumbartonshire, which he regards as peculiarly convenient and effective for such as are able to handle the pen with ordinary facility. Having nearly lost his sight by amaurosis, he contrived the instrument for his own use, and recommends it to others. Providing a simple and complete direction for the hand, it leaves the pen at liberty, so that the writing is performed with the same freedom as in the penmanship of those who have sight. The hand passes and repasses the same line, resting in the natural posture on a broad sheath, under which the paper slides backward from the hand as line after line is written. The proper distance of each line is secured with mechanical precision by a series of notches in a central metallic ridge, upon which a small hammer works. The backward movement for each line is effected with instantaneous facility by a touch of the left-hand fingers.

From The Ladies' Companion.  
AN OLD WOMAN'S STORY.  
BY ELIZABETH TOWNBRIDGE.

## CHAPTER I.

SOME years back it was the custom of our family to go for two or three months of the summer to a place called L—— Island, a little seaside village situated on the southern coast of Ireland, about seven miles from our house. It was a very poor place, the scanty population consisting of a few boat or fisher men, who in the season left their small dwellings, contriving for that time to live with their families in the merest sheds or huts, for the purpose of accommodating bathers from the city of Cork, by whom they made the few pounds which paid their year's rent, or helped to purchase their coarse clothing. It was not a very pretty place either; the only attraction about it being the strand, which was good, and two rather large demesnes belonging to old families, in the grounds of which people had permission to walk. There was no fashion to be met with there, as the whole island could only afford lodgings for five or six families, and these of course only of the middle class, as the poor three or four-roomed cottages would be very unfitting residences indeed for any persons pretending to rank or consequence. However, I can say with truth, that some of the very happiest days of my life were spent there. A brother—some years older than myself—and three cousins (two boys and a girl) constituted our family at the time. Finding ample companionship within ourselves, we did not seek to extend our acquaintance, but got over the time pleasantly enough—strolling along the strand, “gathering shells beside the sea,” lying on the rocks, reading or idly dreaming away the long, lazy summer days, alone or together, just according to our will or fancy; but always meeting in the evening, to talk over or compare any thing which we had seen, thought, or read of during the day.

From one of the rocks just mentioned—a favorite one of mine—which at high-water jutted out into the tide, I recollect watching one of the loveliest sunsets I have ever seen in my life. I mention it now without any particular object: I do not attempt even to describe it; for, even if such scenes were less hackneyed in description than they happen to be, I do not feel adequate to putting

its exquisite loveliness into words. It was as if the summer sky had visited for a time the crystal sea, and that both now lay blushing in the warm embrace with which they parted. The first time I ever remember to have watched the moon set was also from the same spot. It made me feel very still and solemn: I do not know why even now; but it seemed to me to be so holy and so fair, that I felt awed.

One near and dear to me, now far away, and whom I may never see again, I recollect drew me fondly close to him, and asked me why I looked so pale: I could not answer him, but, laying my head upon his shoulder, shed a few silent tears—how lightly and gently they came then! How often, since, I would have given worlds for the genial heart-freshening shower! but in vain.

I believe I was about the greatest dreamer of us all; at least I know that I—then a tall girl of sixteen—used to love to steal away from the rest, and wander by myself wherever chance or fancy led me, which was sometimes to C—— demesne, to sit on one of the sheltered rustic seats, placed so as to have a good view of the sea, watching the heavily laden merchant-ships slowly concluding their long voyage, and bearing their different cargoes up to the busy trading city; watching the snow-white sails of the graceful pleasure-yachts dipping up and down on the water like the white wings of a bird, or the light oars of the pretty rowing-boats, breaking the smooth sea into broad, eddying rings. I have often sat there at night, too, enjoying its gentle peace, the stillness unbroken except by the plaintive cry of the curlew; my inmost being so hushed by the silent calm that I could scarcely be said even to think; but sat lost, as it were, in humble, grateful love towards Him who had formed for us an earth so beautiful. Sometimes I would vary the scene, and go inland to I—— House grounds, visiting the swans (of which, by the way, I was not a little afraid when they came on land) floating about on the clear lake, which lay framed as if in emerald, so smooth and green was the margin, under the shadow of the grand old trees; or, striking into a path which turned off from the principal avenue, find my way to an old graveyard, which was nestled in the very heart of the demesne. It was a strange place to have it in; but there it was, and

had been for years. I was told that, within the past half-century, two or three efforts had been made by the lord of the soil to have it stopped up as a burial-place, but in vain. The Irish peasantry, very tenacious of their rights in such grounds, and the respect due to their dead, stoutly resisted them: and so it remains open up to this day. I wondered much how any one could wish it removed; it was so picturesque, so small too, occupying scarcely half a small field. There were some ruins standing in the midst covered with ivy, and overshadowed by a great tree; but they could not have been the remains of any large building: they seemed more like a part of a house, though it must have been a religious one of some kind, otherwise the dead would not have been gathered round it to rest; but nobody living knew any thing of it, or remembered it other than it was.

The cottage rented by us for the season was the property of a woman named Cottar, whose husband dying some time before, had left her with a family of six children, the eldest about eighteen, the youngest scarcely three years old. Her mother, an aged woman, highly intelligent, and in many things superior to her station, lived with her; it was through her she owned the house now let to us, and which was built on a high cliff over the water, a by-road leading past it to other cottages built further up. The young Cottars had collected stones and built a long bench opposite the door, which, covered with large green sods, formed a pleasant seat, on and around which we generally assembled every evening, the old woman often joining us, holding her youngest grandson in her lap, and giving us many recollections of the island as it was in the olden time. She was a very striking looking person, with her tall figure still erect and full, and her venerable gray hair rolled back in something of the present fashion, under the spotless border of her cap, which, meeting beneath her chin, enclosed her fine face as in a frame. I loved to look at her, with the little fellow's golden curls pressed to her aged bosom; it was such a picture—infancy and old age, the beginning and the end. One delightful evening—the last summer but one we ever spent there—she sat thus, while we young people grouped ourselves around her, and not hav-

ing yet fallen into our usual chat, were silently enjoying the scene, when, suddenly, on every green hill around, and they were many and beautiful, sloping their wooded sides gently downwards to meet and mirror themselves in the clear caressing tide below—a bright bonfire sprang up, when we all exclaimed together—"Ah! it is St. John's eve." We had completely forgotten it, until reminded of it by the fires always lit throughout Ireland on that evening—a remnant, it is said, of Druidical superstition. We were so delighted by the strange beauty of the scene that we took no notice of any thing else, until turning accidentally towards the old woman, I saw that she had placed the child beside her on the ground, who was looking up at her in a sort of affrighted wonder, his little lips quivering and tears brimming up into his great brown eyes, while she sat, not fainting, but with her head thrown back white and motionless, as if she had been carved in stone. I uttered a slight scream, which instantly drew the attention of all on her; then she at once aroused herself, took the child again upon her knee, said it was nothing, that it was past off now, and spoke of the bonfires and other things for a short time; but then again grew silent and pre-occupied, until her second eldest granddaughter and namesake—a wild young thing—exclaimed: "O grandmother! was it not on a St. John's eve you saw the ghost? tell us about it now, will you?"

I saw her slightly shudder, as she answered evasively, "What ghost, child? do not speak of such things."

"Ah! grandmother, do tell us," persevered Mary; "I heard my mother say you saw one such a night as this."

"I never told her any thing of the kind," said the old woman; "she knows nothing of the matter."

"Well, she heard it some way," answered her grandchild; "but she might not have heard it correctly. Do you tell us how it really happened?"

The old woman mused for a minute or two, and then said: "Well, I may not live to another St. John's eve, and I feel less reluctant than usual to speak of it to-night; so, as you are so anxious to hear it, I will tell you the tale, such as it is: but," she added smiling, "you must not expect to

hear any thing about me, it is all concerning a young girl, one Mary Byrne, whom I knew long ago."

For a moment we all laughed merrily, as we knew Mary Byrne to have been her own name before her marriage, and then immediately hushed our mirth to listen to her story.

"I have heard, in the course of my life," she began, "many people wonder at what they were pleased to call my superior intelligence to the other people of this place; but that will be easily accounted for as I go on. My father was a fisherman like the rest, but much more comfortable: he was not only owner of two of the largest fishing-boats leaving the island, but of two of its best houses, to one of which was attached five acres of ground. The boats have long since gone to pieces, but the houses and fields are in the family still, thank God. Children, as you all know, at the time I speak of, bathers or summer visitors were unknown here; the people lived and intermarried among themselves, and were nearly all related or connected in some way. A wild lot they were—wild in their ways and manners, I mean—for they were singularly free from vice of any kind, while crime was a thing never heard of amongst us. Ah! they were better times than these," said the old woman, making the usual remark of old age; "then one felt nearly as much at home in a neighbor's house as in her own—there was the same warm welcome and kind word in joy or in grief, in wealth or in want, all the same. I never knew my mother, she died when I was born, a year after her marriage, when only nineteen years old. I have been told she was a very pretty girl, gentle and good; and it must have been so, for my father never forgot her or married again, although he was also very young, transferring all his love to me, so poor a substitute for her whom he had lost so early. He took an unmarried aunt of hers to live with him and manage his household, and it is only surprising that between them I was not completely spoiled, or that their extreme affection did not render me entirely unfit to go through life; however, I believe, they only succeeded in making me more wilful than I should have been, and more sensitive in feeling the slightest coldness, fancied or

otherwise, from one I loved, than was at all necessary.

"I have been told that I was a very lovely child. The gray hair now confined beneath this cap then fell long and free. My father would never suffer it to be touched by a scissors, so that I have heard it said it hung round me in shining chestnut rings, far below my shoulders; large brown eyes dancing in the light of a joy which had never known a shadow; full, dimpled lips, red as berries, with health and exercise, made the arch, sunbrowned face a perfect picture of childish beauty; and it was to it I owed whatever little education or refinement I possess. Then, you know, children," she continued, "we had no such things as National or Convent Schools; we were at that time, indeed, to all intents and purposes, the 'benighted Irish.' I cannot say I regretted this state of things very much. I strung shell necklaces; made wreaths of seaweed, scrambled over the rocks after my father, making myself as soiled, tired, and happy as I could possibly do from one year's end to the other; and feeling just as contented as if 'all those who were in high station' had sat up for long nights legislating for my especial benefit in the way of education. So matters went on until I had reached my sixth year, about which time C— demesne—'The Great House,' as we were in the habit of calling it—which had been for some time unoccupied, the owner being a minor, was taken by a Captain Helston, who came hither to recruit his health, which had suffered severely during a long residence in the east. His family consisted of his wife and one daughter, about my own age. She was the last of their children, they had buried five others in India, and only saved her by leaving it about two years before. She was a very weakly little creature; seldom quite well, though gradually improving; pale, to sallowness, in complexion; and with no beauty, except her great black eyes; her hair kept continually cut short, for the purpose of strengthening it, did not add to the interest of her appearance; and, on the whole, she was a very plain child. There could scarcely be a greater contrast than that between the healthy, handsome little fisher-girl, Mary Byrne, and the delicate, languid, almost tawny little Indian lady, Miss Hel-

ston. From the time of their coming amongst us she was taken out daily in a small carriage of her own, for an airing, attended by her maid. It was on one of these occasions, very soon after their arrival at C—, that she saw me playing with some other children in the village, and was at once attracted by my appearance, and stopped the carriage that I might be brought to her 'to look at,' as she or the man who brought the message, phrased it. I, at that time in a most unchristian-like state of ignorance of my duty towards my superiors, stoutly refused to leave whatever game I was engaged in, and would not be bribed even by a large peach which the servant offered me to go and speak to the ugly little girl, as I called her. They had to give me up in despair, and return home with the wondering, disappointed child. However, so much did she speak of her adventure to her mother, and so anxious were her parents to do any thing that could amuse or interest her, that they sought me out, and with a sort of stiff condescension expressed their desire to my father that I should be sent up to their place occasionally for Miss Helston's amusement. He granted permission readily enough, the grand difficulty being with me, as it was only by force of my father's entreaties, backed by an almost unlimited bribe in playthings, that I could be persuaded to overcome my dislike to going among strangers. At length, however, I was wiled up to C— to spend the day. There—I recollect it as well as if it had occurred but yesterday—I at first would not speak at all, neither would I touch any of the various dainties spread out to tempt my appetite; but when they ceased teasing me by too much notice I gradually grew more familiar, ending by making the large, airy nursery ring again with my merry glee and laughter. I recollect, also, one thing in particular which has often amused me since I grew to know better. The child was always addressed, as a matter of course, by all people, except her parents, as 'Miss Helston;' but I, on hearing her mother call her Lucilla, in the course of our play called her so also, as I should to one of my little village playfellows. The governess immediately bent down to me, and whispered:—

"Not Lucilla, love; say Miss Helston."

"I looked up at her in open surprise, and answered:—

"But she calls me Mary."

"In short, I was a complete little savage—knowing or caring nothing of distinctions or titles, and rather looking down than otherwise on the sickly little creature I was called on to amuse."

#### CHAPTER II.

"NEITHER Captain nor Mrs. Helston ever really desired my companionship for their daughter; but when they discovered that when every one else failed, I could always succeed in luring her out into the grounds or garden for some health-giving play; that it was only while listening to my merry chatter that they ever heard the sound of her soft childish laughter, or that even the faintest color struggled to her dark cheek, they at least tolerated my presence. They soon found also that almost the only way of inducing the young heiress to learn any thing was to have me share the lesson with her, and consequently, the governess received orders to include me in her instructions, her salary being duly increased in consideration of her additional trouble."

"I have often thought since what a sad life she must have had of it between the almost unmanageable antics of my mercurial temperament and the indolent apathy of Miss Helston. She was very patient and gentle, though, and by the very sweetness of her disposition often shamed us (for I believe I may say we were both good-hearted children in the main) into making exertions which we would not have made for an ill-tempered or harsh teacher."

"At my father's express desire, as well as by my own wish, I always slept at home except on very rare occasions, when, by Captain Helston's directions, I slept with the upper-housemaid, for the purpose of preserving a due distinction between Miss Helston and myself; neither was I to be taught any of the accomplishments—such as music, painting, etc.—which she was to acquire as she grew up: nothing but reading, writing, and needlework. The two first I acquired rapidly: the last (to my shame be it spoken) was a complete failure, as to this day I can scarcely cut out or make the simplest garment worn by this little fellow on my knee. On the whole, I wonder much (with all the rules and regulations her parents thought fit to make about us) that they did not succeed



in making me cordially dislike my gentle, unassuming little playfellow; but it was not so. I grew daily more and more fond of her; but always, I think, in a patronizing sort of way; for while I could at all times dispense with her company (amusing myself in many ways after my own wild fashion), she was totally dependent on me, being ever drooping and listless in my absence.

"She was very fond of embroidery, and I have often got myself into sad disgrace by tossing about and entangling the silks and chenil with which she worked what seemed to me to be impossible gentlemen, and houses, and ladies, and sheep, on white satin; while I sat at her feet, either silent or telling her some long story which I had read, or just as often invented, for her amusement and my own.

"So things went on, until I had attained my fourteenth year, when the owner of C—, becoming of age, wished to enter into possession of his own family place, and it therefore became necessary for the Helstons to remove from it. Captain Helston regretted this much; while Mrs. Helston was secretly pleased, as she had long wished to remove where Lucilla could have the benefit of masters, and be otherwise fittingly prepared for her entrance into society; while she herself, poor little thing! only felt regret at leaving a place so familiar to her, and endeared, I may add, by so many innocent enjoyments—a thought of being separated from me apparently never entered her mind, as I was included in all her plans for the future.

"I listened in silence, disliking to cause her pain until it became absolutely unavoidable; though I knew that my father would not wish me to leave him; nor would I do so for any one on earth. Mrs. Helston seemed also to wish it to be understood that I should continue to form part of the household; but in a different position. I was to be Miss Helston's own maid, her mother undertaking, on their arrival in Bath (their future place of residence) to have me instructed in the necessary duties of that situation.

"Mrs. Helston was a person whom (ungrateful as it may sound) I never could like; one who never had, nor ever could have, any influence with me. Cold, haughty, and formal, with an assumption of wisdom which I

never acknowledged, and an outward severe observance of all the forms of her religion—Wesleyan Protestant—which I, with a hastiness of judgment, which I regret to say accompanied me through life, had long ago decided uncharitably, argued little of its reality in her heart; and yet this opinion of mine was, I know, mere prejudice, as with high principle, even at an age when she could have done so easily, she never interfered with my religion—the Roman Catholic; nay, she even inquired occasionally of my aunt if she saw that I neglected none of its duties. Her acts were all kind, and she distributed much relief among the surrounding poor; but in vain, there was nothing genial or kind in her manner, and I do not believe they ever cared much for her, or felt particularly grateful for her charity. I often thought her being a wife and mother a strange mistake of nature, as she seemed originally intended for a state of single-blessedness, which, I confess, girls," said the old woman, smiling, "in spite of all that has been preached of late years in favor of good old maids and nuns, is a state against which I always had and have a prejudice.

"I dwell thus upon the character of Mrs. Helston merely to explain why it was that I came to so unhesitating a decision when the time for making one arrived.

"I recollect it was winter, Miss Lucilla and I were in the schoolroom about midday, when a servant came to say I was wanted in the library by the mistress. Now, the library was a place I hated entering, as it was always associated in my mind with the captain's sour remarks and bilious appearance. Miss Helston asked if she were also to go down, but the man said, 'No, only Mary Byrne.' So timid as she ever was, but particularly with her father, I did not ask her to accompany me, but went alone. On entering the room I found, as I expected, Captain Helston, sheltered from even the slightest puff of air behind a large japanned screen—I can recall every grotesque figure on it even now. He sat in a huge arm-chair, beside a great fire, his thin yellow face appearing above innumerable wraps, and bearing a more than usual expression of suffering and discontent. Seated without the screen at a table, on which were writing materials, was Mrs. Helston. Sitting or standing she always seemed taller than she really was, so

much of stateliness was there in her perfectly proportioned figure, as well as from the high headdress worn at that time. Her features were also handsome and aristocratic-looking, high and pale, but very fair; while her large, grand-looking blue eyes had always a cold calm look in them, peculiarly irritating to one of my quick temper. Before her stood my father, in the coarse garb of a fisherman, holding his low-crowned leather hat in his hand. He was a fine-looking man," said the old woman, fondly, "with his erect figure and open, manly face. I never met him in my life, no matter how short had been our parting, but he embraced me; and in spite of the unsympathizing witnesses he did so now. He kissed me tenderly, passing his rough hand over my hair, but did not speak. In another moment the silence was broken by the lady saying,—

"‘Mary Byrne,’ she never called me Mary in her life, my surname was invariably added to it, probably another way of teaching me my distance—‘Mary Byrne, I have sent for your father this morning, as I think it right he should be told the exact day of your leaving: it will be Thursday next. I conceived you had yourself told him all the other arrangements made for your benefit; but it seems you have not done so—how is this?’

"‘You had not spoken to me, madam, of any arrangements,’ I answered, ‘therefore I could not tell my father any thing of them.’

"‘Nor had she; her intentions regarding me merely came out in her directions relating to Miss Helston. She did not address herself to me again, but, turning towards my father, said,—

"‘My daughter has been so accustomed to Mary Byrne that I believe she dislikes being waited on by another; I intend, therefore, to take her to England, where, after a little time and instruction, as she is rather intelligent, I have no doubt she will make a very good ladies’-maid. I believed she knew of this herself, and that she had informed you of my wishes on the matter.’

"‘I saw the blood mount up to my father’s very brow as he answered:—

"‘Madam, I thank you for all your goodness to my child; but you must not think me ungrateful when I say I have no desire to part with her. I have no one now in the world to love me but her; and, besides, I have enough to leave her when I am gone,

or to give her when a fit time comes for our parting—that is when she leaves me for some honest man’s house. Pardon me, madam, I do not want her to be any person’s servant, not even her own.’

"Mrs. Helston felt, I suppose, too much scorn of his presumption in giving expression to such ideas in her presence to even *look* her surprise. But the captain, too indolent to speak, turned impatiently towards her, to whom he always left the family arrangements, as if he wished her to end the scene at once; but she did not do so, for raising her eyes to my father’s face, she said, with the same unvarying coldness of manner:—

"‘Mary Byrne has been with us so long, and is so useful to my daughter, that I think it my duty to point out to you the injury you do her by keeping her in this mean village, when such great advantages are offered her elsewhere.’

"This remark made an evident impression on my father, for he said, uneasily:—

"‘All her people lived here and were happy, why should not she? But I will not hereafter have to accuse myself of sacrificing her happiness to my own; young as she is, thanks, madam, to your protection, she is very intelligent, she shall decide for herself, I will offer no opinion one way or the other. Mary,’ he continued, addressing himself to me, ‘you understand what has just been offered to you. Mrs. Helston who has always been so good, offers to take you with her family to England, where you will learn and enjoy many things you cannot even dream of here; you will also be with the little lady whom you love so much; in short, you have every thing to gain by going, nothing to regret in leaving this place, except perhaps for a short time your poor aunt and me. Make your choice now, child; do just as you yourself please.’

"I heard him in silence to the very last word; and, though my heart was beating violently, by a strong effort I managed to appear outwardly unmoved, as with a saucy determination which at that time formed part of my character, I was resolved she should have no scene to sneer at. As he concluded, then, I said, very quietly:—

"‘I shall be, I am sure, very sorry for parting with Miss Lucilla, but I could not leave you, father, at all. I will not go to England; I prefer staying at home.’

"A sigh of relief lifted my father's broad chest for a moment as the decision was made; and Mrs. Helston said to me:—

"You can return *now* with your father, and without seeing Miss Helston; she is not strong, and leave-taking would merely excite her without doing good. I shall not object to her seeing you on the morning of her departure, if she wishes it; but desire you do not attempt coming here for that purpose unless especially sent for."

"My father would have spoken something of gratitude for past favors; but she waved her hand in token of dismissal, and we withdrew, the captain giving an additional growl and shiver as the door opened for our departure.

"In spite of her mother's injunction I made two or three efforts to see Miss Lucilla, but in vain, she was watched too closely.

"They went on the day appointed, as I had expected, without my being sent for. I did not blame my little companion; I knew she was far too gentle to oppose her mother in any thing, but I pitied her much, as I knew how much she grieved at losing me; and I grieved also, though with an involved sort of grief. I was sorry, so to speak, at not being more sorry at parting with her.

"Mrs. Barnett, who had been housekeeper at C— ever since the Helstons came amongst us, was now a rather aged woman, and declining also to go with them to Bath, had been, on Mrs. Helston's recommendation, retained in her old office by Mr. Parnell, the young heir, so that I had still a link binding me to the place. She was always glad to see me, and I used often to visit the nursery and schoolroom, and at first cried heartily at their deserted appearance; or sometimes (though, strange to say, I never cared for flowers myself, except to pull them to pieces) went into the garden and saw that none of Miss Helston's favorite plants were neglected. Through the housekeeper I also learned that so much had Miss Lucilla pined at our parting, that she had been sent to a grand boarding-school, in order that she should have companions of her own age, and where she was now growing daily happier and more reconciled. But she could not be more so than I was myself. Nor did I ever, for a moment even, regret my refusal to accompany them to their new home.

"For the next four years nothing worth

relating occurred; but in my eighteenth year (with all due modesty be it spoken) I was, without exception, the handsomest girl not only in the village, but the country round it; yet though admired and talked of by all the young men of the neighborhood, my name had never been connected with that of any one of them until one evening when a message arrived to me from Mrs. Barnett to go up to her and take tea, as she had delightful news to tell me. I went. It was a cold evening in spring, and while taking off my cloak and smoothing my hair, she told me that Mr. Parnell was to be married within a month. To whom did I think? Why, to Miss Lucilla Helston! and they were to come to C—, almost immediately after, with the intention of making it their permanent home. Some arrangements relative to their former occupation of his house had introduced Mr. Parnell to the family, and so led to the acquaintance which had terminated in the present engagement. The death of the captain had delayed the matter for a year; but now all was arranged for the marriage. She also told me I was to meet, at tea, a new chief-gardener, who had arrived that morning from England, having been sent over by Mr. Parnell to see that, with all due deference to the tastes of the young bride, her gardens should be in the fullest possible beauty on her arrival.

"In a few minutes after I was introduced to William West, a very handsome, intelligent young man, agreeable in his manners, and apparently particularly inclined to admire me from the very first. I on the contrary, though giving him credit for all his exterior advantages, felt prejudiced against him. His English accent was offensive to my ear, and the many little attentions offered by him to us both at the tea-table, though ordinary enough I should say in civilized life, seemed to my uncouth taste trifling and unmanly. He displayed also a sort of surprise at meeting any one fit to speak to in such a place as L— Island, which piqued my vanity; so putting, as "poor shopkeepers" (according to Goldsmith) do, "my best goods in my shop-windows," I displayed all the little knowledge I had, and kept up the ball of conversation with him pretty well for the evening; and when the hour came for returning home, to my extreme amusement he insisted on escorting me—a piece

of politeness totally unknown among us. Not that a young man and woman who liked each other did not walk together sometimes, but then the mere fact of their being seen thus was looked on as a certain mark of approaching marriage. Yet though knowing this fact well, and more than guessing the suffering it would cause one person in particular, with a coquetry native to my character and a reckless disregard of village gossip, I permitted him to do so.

"Just as I anticipated, in a day or two it was reported that Mary Byrne was keeping company with the new gardener at C—; nay, as weeks passed over, and we were still sometimes seen together, it was settled for us that we were to be married immediately on the arrival of the bride and bridegroom, now daily expected, as we were merely waiting for them to grace our wedding with their presence.

"If that were all we waited for, we were not to be delayed long, as they arrived very shortly after. At the close of a fine summer day, about a month after their marriage, on the very evening of their arrival, I had a message from my dear lady, saying she would expect me impatiently on the following morning, about eleven o'clock; and it was indeed with eager steps I hastened up the avenue even before the appointed hour next day. I was met on the lawn by Mr. Parnell, who, having seen me before during one of his visits to C—, came forward and shook hands with me very kindly. He went up himself with me to his wife's dressing-room, where she received me with the warmest affection. Both laughed heartily at my undisguised surprise at the change in her appearance. Why, she had grown into the most elegant, happy-looking creature it was possible to imagine. Her large black eyes, always beautiful, had a shy, loving, intelligent expression in them, like those of a fawn; her small well-shaped head was crowned with a profusion of rich black hair, which it annoyed me to see disfigured with powder; her lips, full and glowing as coral, were parted by a sweet smile, which showed all the glistening teeth within, making one forget the irregularity of the other features; while her light figure, full yet slight, was lithe and graceful as a willow wand. I could not grow tired of looking at her. The awkward, sallow, suffering little girl had grown

into the most lovely and lovable woman one could wish to meet with.

"After a short time Mr. Parnell good-naturedly left us together, although, he said, he well knew how dangerous a rival he left behind him.

"And then came our long story. She was just as unpretending and affectionate as ever. Raising my thick curls, she exclaimed like a child at their great length and beauty. She made me stand beside her to measure which was the taller. I used to be formerly, but she had the advantage now; compared her own dark but clear skin to mine, laughing at the contrast, for I was very fair, and told me how she had grieved after me for a long time, how she had never forgotten me, or formed any particular friendship for any young lady at school. She spoke of her father's death, and what a release it was from his long suffering; of her mother, too, affectionately, telling how Mr. Parnell invited her to live with them, but she would not, preferring to live by herself in England.

"Then she told me of her love for her husband, and of his for her, blushing at her own happiness; and, lastly, blaming, what she called her own egotism, bid me speak of myself, and tell all my story since we separated.

"I answered, my story was easily told. I had lived as she had ever known me to do, nothing more.

"'Nay,' she said, smiling, and turning my face towards her with her little soft hand, 'you must not begin by trying to deceive me, I have already found time to hear some of Barnett's news, and she tells me you are about to be married to West, the new gardener. I was glad to hear it; my husband speaks highly of him, and it will keep you near me.'

"'There is not one word of truth in it,' I answered, hastily; 'I have no idea of marrying the man; I do not like him at all.'

"'You surprise me much,' she said, with sudden gravity, which gave an expression to her sweet young face like a child playing at wisdom; 'Barnett tells me you have often met him in her room at tea; that you receive many attentions from him; that you even allow him to walk with you, which I know is never done in this village unless when an engagement exists. How is it then,

Mary, that you tell me such is not the case with you ?'

"I could say nothing, I felt how wrong I had been all through ; and so, as the only answer I could make, I knelt down beside her, and hiding my face in her lap, burst into tears.

"After a little she said,—

"I think I understand, this is one of the lovers' quarrels I have heard of, though I never had one myself.'

"Poor Miss Lucilla ! I could well believe her ; she would have died, I think, rather than give Mr. Parnell, either before or after her marriage, one moment's annoyance.

"Tell me about it that we may make it up, and have the wedding after all.'

"No, no,' I sobbed out, 'I never intended it ; I do not want him at all.'

"Then why did you permit him to think you did?" asked the wondering girl, whose gentle, well-regulated mind could not understand my impetuous, impulsive character at all.

"I do not know,' I said ; 'I cannot be finding reasons for every thing I do. How could I help what he thought? I believe it was half in fun, half to fret some one else.'

"O Mary !' said Mrs. Parnell, 'I fear you are as wilful as ever ; but, poor child ! you had no mother to teach you better. But come,' she said, kissing my hot cheek, 'you know I am an old matron now, tell who this "some one else" is—is there any one whom you really like? Now tell me all.'

"And in broken words, amid blushes and smiles and tears, I did tell her all.

"She heard me with affectionate interest ; but at the close I was obliged to make her a solemn promise that I would no longer trifle with the feelings of William West ; but at the first opportunity which offered I should at once make him understand in as firm, but as kind a manner as possible, the utter hopelessness of the idea that I should ever marry him. She then insisted that I should stay and dine with my friend Mrs. Barnett, that, on her return from driving with Mr. Parnell, she might have another chat with me while she dressed for dinner.

"I did so, and at about half-past seven in the evening set off alone for my own home. I had not proceeded far on my way, however, when I was joined by my unwelcome ad-

mirer, who, I suppose, had been watching for me, as he knew I had passed the day at C—.

"There is no occasion to dwell on our conversation ; enough he asked me to become his wife, and I, with some difficulty, succeeded in convincing him that I was serious in my civil refusal to bear his name. We parted at the demense gate, he evidently more wounded in his vanity than his love, thinking me 'daft to refuse the Laird o' Cock-pen'; nor could I flatter my vanity by persuading myself that he grieved much after me, as he was married to a very amiable, nice-looking young woman in about a year after, some of his grandchildren living about here to this day.

### CHAPTER III.

"I WILL tell you the truth, as I told Mrs. Parnell on that morning," said the old woman, unconsciously quoting Shelley—"I will tell you truth, I loved another,' otherwise perhaps I might have been induced to take William West ; but, as it was, that could not be. With my usual oddity, too, I loved one who was about the least likely in the whole island that I should love, and who had never told me that he loved me. His name was James Higgins ; his father had been drowned some years before while in our employment, after which unhappy occurrence my father was very kind to his poor widow and her son. As soon as the latter was strong enough to be of the slightest use in a fishing-boat, he took him into his own, giving him the full wages of a man ; and as he was now twenty-four years old, I had known him long and intimately. I had always liked him, but it was only lately that I had made two discoveries regarding him—the one, that I loved him better than any one else in the world ; the other, that he—I believed firmly—loved me just as well. I had noticed with pleasure his extreme suffering on hearing all the reports concerning my intimacy with the new gardener—I say, with pleasure, as I looked on it as one of the best proofs of his affection for me ; though he, in his turn, inflicted torture on me by almost systematically avoiding me ; and on some of the occasions when he had more than usually annoyed me by his coldness, I have often deliberately sat down to ask myself why it was I cared for him at all. He was



not handsome, though to be near him, with his dark eyes fixed on me, gave me a sensation of delight and security which I felt in the society of no other person. Though totally uneducated, as almost all men of his class were, he was highly intelligent. Active and faithful in his trust, he was now the chief man in our second boat. His character was generous and manly, while he was a most affectionate and attentive son to an aged and ailing mother. The only fault I could discover in his character was pride—pride carried to excess. Possibly I should not have noticed that either, but that it wounded myself—as I felt convinced but for it I should have been told of his love long ago. But I was looked on by the people about as an heiress—the prospective possessor of two fishing-boats, two houses, and five acres of land. Why, it was something magnificent; while he, poor fellow! had the full weight of the primal curse laid upon him, ‘eating his bread in the sweat of his brow,’ how could he dream of raising his hope to a person filling such a position! He *would* not, then, and I *could* not speak; and so we went on torturing one another, as two young people often do until the time comes for mutual explanations, which always does come, sooner or later, when true love exists between them.

“On this, the most eventful evening of my life—the evening of the day I had been to visit Mrs. Parnell—my father had gone to fish before my return home, and I felt more than usually irritable and angry with James. I knew he had been at home all day, I had seen him in the morning, on my way to C—, talking to a young girl named Ellie Sullivan; and, although I knew he did not care for her, still it annoyed me. He did not come into our place all the evening, nor could I learn, without absolutely asking my aunt, which I would not do, whether he had also gone out to sea or not. So, chiefly to avoid speaking or being spoken to, I left the house and walked down to the end of our own fields, where, leaning on the low wall which bounded them, I could look out on the water.

“I had not been there very long when, by the thrill of joy which shivered my heart, as it ever did at his coming, I knew that *he*—to me, the one *he* of the whole world—was near me; and though on the thick summer grass I had heard no footstep, on looking up James Higgins was at my side.

“He looked very pale, with a stern expression about his mouth, which always made me fear him; and what struck me as strange was that he wore the clothes which he usually wore on Sundays, and that from the stick which he balanced across the wall hung a small bundle tied up in a blue handkerchief.

“I looked at him for a moment without speaking, and then turned away my head in affected carelessness.

“After a minute or so he said, ‘Well, Mary, I wish you joy.’

“Alas! Mrs. Parnell had a great deal to do yet; for, though I perfectly well knew what he meant, yet, in my wilfulness, I would not deceive him. I simply answered,—

“‘Thank you, you are very kind.’

“‘I suppose,’ he said, ‘it was all settled to-day? I saw you parting with him at the gate. I am told that Mrs. Parnell thinks highly of West.’

“‘Yes,’ I answered, meekly, ‘she has a very good opinion of him; she speaks of him in the kindest manner.’

“While speaking I had collected a little heap of pebbles before me, and was now throwing them idly, one after the other, into the tide below. I saw, with all his forced calmness, how much my manner teased him; and yet, though very anxious myself to learn the mystery of the clothes and bundle, I persevered in my apparent indifference. He went on again,—

“‘He is very comfortably off, I believe.’

“‘To be sure he is,’ I answered, saucily; ‘do you suppose I would notice a poor man?’

“I said it without a moment’s thought, or, Heaven knows, bad as I was, I would not have wounded him so bitterly: I have often since regretted it, even to tears.

“‘Much hurt, he answered quickly, ‘You need not fear that I ever thought so, I am well aware you would not.’

“His love for me must have been something wonderful, for even still he lingered, saying,—

“‘Your father will be very lonely when you are gone.’

“‘I am not to leave him,’ I said; ‘we are to live together still; I am sure we shall get on very well. Remember, you are to be at my wedding; I intend it to be very gay.’

“‘I shall not be in the island,’ he answered quickly; ‘I am leaving this place to-night, I hope forever.’

"I felt myself suddenly grow white and weak, for I knew if once his firm, determined will had decided on any thing, how all but hopeless it was to seek to change it. I felt that I had just uttered what, to his sensitive feelings, must have seemed a deliberate insult; and, leaning heavily against the wall for support, he must have been struck with the change in my voice as I asked in a low tone,—

"Where are you going to?"

"There is a king's ship in the cove," he said, "wanting men; I am sure of being taken, as I have been accustomed to the water all my life. I intend setting off to-night, and being there by early morning."

"And your mother?" I asked.

"His gaze was fixed abstractedly far away over the sea, as he replied,—

"It is not likely I should forget her; your father has promised me he will always see to her wants. Then, I can send her my half-pay; and I have left her the few pounds I had spared."

"Yes," I said, bitterly, "she asks you for the tone of your voice, for the kind look of your eyes, for the sound of your footstep on the floor—she asks for the delight of performing all household duties for you, for the comfort of your morning or evening return home—she asks you to let her look at you—she is old now—to let her look at you, her good son, until she dies; and in exchange for all this you say that a stranger will see to her wants; that you will send her money—money; she 'asks you for bread,' and you are offering her 'a stone.'"

"I had spoken rapidly, I scarcely knew what, any thing to give vent to my agitated feelings. I had grown strong again, too, and spoke with much excitement. He was also strangely moved, and stood gazing at me curiously and doubtfully. The look recalled me to myself, and I added, in a calmer tone, and with something of my former carelessness,—

"Your resolve is very sudden; what has occurred to render the place so disagreeable to you that you must fly from it? Does Ellie Sullivan approve of such hasty proceedings?"

"Stung to madness at what he considered my cruel caprice, he exclaimed, fiercely,—

"Girl! or devil! whichever you are, you may scorn my love as I was fool enough to

let you see it; but I will not stay here to be tortured any longer. Give me your hand for the last time, and say good-by—give me your hand."

"My hand—give him my hand—my hand, when I had given him my heart and soul! my hand, when my arms were clinging round his neck, as if the clasp was never to be loosened! my hand, when his strong heart, was throbbing wildly against mine, and his kisses falling in a warm shower upon my lips and brow! for, at his last words forgetting every thing in my deep terror of losing him, I had sprung towards him with a loud cry, exclaiming,—

"I refused that man to-day! I would not marry him, I love no one else but you; if you leave me I must die!"

"And he did not leave me," went on the old woman, much moved, as indeed, we all were—young hearts are easily moved at such a story—"he did not leave me—my fond, fond lover—my kind, indulgent husband, who took me, with all my follies and weaknesses and caprices, under the protecting shadow of his manly strength of character; who loved me, not with the blind passion which can see no defect in its temporary idol, but with that true love of the affections which, while discerning all my faults, and endeavoring, with a wise tenderness, to correct them; yet loved me in despite of, nay, I sometimes fancied almost *because* of them.

"Some of you children," she continued, "remember your grandfather, it is not so long since I lost him. I now live on but in the hope of soon rejoining him; but, oh! if in another state of existence it is permitted to us to remember the happy moments of this, the memory of that evening's joy will for me ever mingle with the joys of heaven!"

"We lingered on in the same spot until evening deepened into night, speaking together in all the sweet confidence of love. He told me how my father had argued with him against his wild plan of being a sailor; how he had told him that he had always wished that he should be his son-in-law, though he feared that was now impossible, I seemed so taken up with West, and that he would never oppose my wishes. He said he had left his mother without taking leave of her, and had intended to act in the same way by me; but, happening to see me pass down through the fields alone, the tempta-

tion proved too strong for him, and he had followed me. How glad we both felt that he had done so now! But, as the fair moon rose, and the bright stars looked down upon our happiness, with his arm around me and my head resting on his shoulder, we gradually became silent, forgetting alike father and mother, the future and the past, in the delicious consciousness of each other's presence, and of the deep peace and love which had at length fallen upon our united lives. So my aunt, who, wondering at my long absence, came to seek me, found us, and our attitude, for neither moved as she approached, told her our story without a word—one which contributed not a little to her happiness, for, like my father, she, too, was anxious for our marriage, believing it to be the surest means of keeping me always near her.

"We walked back together to our house, James parting with us at the door, saying, laughingly, he would go and change his travelling clothes, and try his luck with the net again after all.

"My aunt went to bed immediately, but I, too restless and busy in mind to sleep, after a time, wrapping a shawl about me, opened the door softly and passed out again into the soft night air. So pre-occupied as I had been by other thoughts, that just as it occurred this evening, I had completely forgotten it was St. John's Eve, until reminded of it by a bright bonfire still burning on an opposite hill; and, surely, I believe it was the loveliest eve of St. John that ever came. All things lay charmed to rest, under the silvery rays of the fair round moon, earth's very breath seemed hushed. I mean, the sweet-scented night-breeze. There was no curl on the water; not a leaf stirred on the tall trees round our cottage. Attracted by the stillness and beauty of the scene, I strolled down upon the strand, and seating myself on a large stone a little distance from the tide; listened to the tiny wavelets, as each after another broke, with a low, clear murmur, in ripples at my feet. There was no dread in my mind, no terror on my soul. All my thoughts were of coming joy and happiness—I trust, also, of gratitude, to the Giver of all good, who had bestowed them on me. But chiefly, I think, my wishes were fixed upon my father's return in the morning; I was so anxious he should

know all, and that from his own lips I should have have his sanction and his blessing.

"I was thinking of this," said the old woman, "when suddenly, and as if summoned by my longing desire to see him, he stood before me in a straight line between me and the water. My first impulse, as it ever was, was to go to him: but, though I arose quickly from my seat, I found I could not move one step; a sudden feeling of awe chilling the blood in my veins—the very marrow in my bones, with a strange, appalling alarm. He was very pale; his clothes dripping wet: and I observed some bunches of seaweed clinging to his coat. Yet he seemed untroubled and calm. His wan lips slowly opened, and moved, as if he was speaking, though I could hear no sound. Whether it was that no sound issued from them, or that I was too terrified to hear it, I do not know. Though this occurred three distinct times, I never heard even a single word. Then raising his hand, as though in the act of blessing me—at least I love to persuade myself that so it was—he vanished, showing his face still towards me,—back, back into the sea!

"I know no more. James and his comrades found me, as they passed to their boat, sunk in a deep swoon. On recovering I saw I was laid on my own bed, surrounded by many of the neighbors who had been called up to render assistance. To them I told what I had seen: some believed me implicitly, others laughed, and said I was raving: but I cared little for their faith or for their scoffing. I knew the truth of the vision myself—knew well that, however it had occurred, I had seen my dead father, and that he had been drowned. And so it was—none ever knew how! He had left the large boat, about eleven o'clock on St. John's Eve, in the small one belonging to her, for the purpose of returning home for some fishing-tackle which they had forgotten and was never after seen alive. The boat was found upturned next morning. It was thought he must have been dragged down beneath her, as his body (the very seaweeds as I had described them clinging to his coat) was found very near her.

"I will not sadden your young hearts by speaking of my sorrow for him, or the long nervous illness which I endured after his death. Suffice it that it was fully twelve

months before I became the wife of James Higgins which I did at length, and for my lifelong happiness. Our lives (with that one exception of my father's untimely end) were singularly free from trial, our children were dutiful and good; and though they have been long scattered in many strange lands and places, with their children, they never forgot us, or me, now that he is gone. Mrs. Parnell (dear Miss Lucilla) and her husband were kind friends to us always. They are both dead now; their grandson, young Walter Parnell (he often comes to visit me), is the present owner of C—. My story is now ended, children," said the old woman. "I have spoken this night what has not passed my lips for long, long years;

and something tells me this is the last St. John's Eve I shall ever see."

She was right. Not in the pleasant summer-time, which she enjoyed so much, but in the depth of the wild winter, when the wailing wind came moaning, like a banshee, through the leafless branches of the trees around her home, and the great rough sea leaped roaring over the high cliff, wetting the cottage-windows with its spraylike tears—then she died; and they laid her to rest, with some children she had lost early, beside the father and the husband whom in life she had loved so well.

The following year, when we came to occupy our favorite summer-habitation, her place upon the green bench was vacant. Mary Byrne was gone to her longed-for resting-place. The old woman was no more.

**THE MOVING GLACIERS.**—In 1827 Hugi ran up a little cabin at the base of a rock which divides the Finster Aar from the Lauter Aar tributaries. Returning in 1830, he found that it had sailed down the frozen stream to a distance of about three hundred and thirty feet. Six years afterwards this nomadic mansion had advanced upwards of two thousand four hundred feet; and when Agassiz fell in with it in 1841, greatly to his surprise he discovered that it had performed a journey of four thousand four hundred feet since its erection. There it was, as sound and well preserved after its lonely travels, as if it had been kept under a glass case all the while. In 1787 De Saussure left a ladder on the Glacier du Geant. In 1830 it was found embedded in the Mer de Glace, having travelled the intervening distance at the rate of three hundred and seventy-five feet per annum.—*British Quarterly Review*.

**SPIRITUAL SONGS.**—How many sweet and joyous, or deep and touching hymns are there in our days, as doubtless there have been in all times, which never reach beyond the family or social circle which they gladden! How many have been written to comfort one sorrowful heart, and having accomplished that, are heard no more. How many gush out on occasions of some special sorrow, or joy, or deliverance, and are forgotten like the song of the birds who poured out their happy music yesterday morning.

Yet none of these are lost; they reach God,

to whom they are sung, and they speak of him to man—and more neither song nor singer can seek to be or do. And not only this. There are tens of thousands who never wrote a hymn, who may yet have made better spiritual music with many hymns than those who wrote them. The hymn writer only speaks the thought or feeling of all Christians, and the echo may often be sweeter and purer than the original notes, because less mixed up with self. The faith which sees the invisible, and is loftier than all flights of imagination, is not the dower of a few, but the heritage of all.

The whole church is a choir, as well as a priesthood. The harps of God, with the priestly robes of festival, and the victors' crowns, are the purchased possession of all who stand by that sea of glass mingled with fire. But what those images mean, and what that song and that joy will be, we know not yet; we only know that it shall be, and that its first notes are only to be learned on earth.—*The Voice of Christian Life in Songs*.

**THE London periodicals, daily, weekly, and monthly, are swallowing up all the literary talent of England. Tennyson writes for them, so do Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, Savage Landor, Ruskin, the Brownings, Lord John Russell, Lord John Manners, and many others. Books seem to be at a discount, but all the world finds time to read the magazines and newspapers. Consequently, the novelists, the poets, the art critics, the scientific men, the philosophers submit to the law they cannot repeal.**

From The Saturday Review, 13 Oct.  
THE PAPAL ALLOCUTION.

THE poor old pope's last allocution differs from his previous jeremiads only in the more intense transport of rage and fear excited by the closer approach of sacrilegious hands to the divine strong-box. The supreme moment of impious aggression, such as the most daring wickedness could hardly have conceived, has actually arrived. The property bestowed on the successors of St. Peter by the forged donation of Constantine and other "special decrees of Divine Providence" is vanishing with fearful rapidity into the pockets of wretches who all the while call themselves Catholics and profess the most sincere devotion to the holy see. "Their perversity has reached to such a point that the hostile troops of the Sub-Alpine army, having been sent almost to the foot of the walls of our well-beloved capital, all communication is stopped; public and private affairs are in suspense; the roads are intercepted, and, what is more serious, the sovereign pontiff is reduced to the most painful embarrassment for the affairs of the Church, and cannot provide for it, since the principal road the world is closed." The ill-looking man, of communication with the different parts of with his hand suspiciously held behind his back, draws nearer and nearer along the lonely lane, and the shrieks of the elderly female, and her screams for help to the "Catholic" neighborhood, grow louder and more agonized. "Incredible pain and profound sorrow"—"attacks unheard of till these days"—"defiance of all laws, human and divine"—"monstrous injustice"—"iniquitous and truly sacrilegious act"—"impious usurpation"—"bands of worthless men"—"false accusations, calumnies, and outrages"—"impious and hostile aggression"—"unjust and impious aggression"—"indignation and grief seizing the whole Catholic world"—"singular malignity"—"perfidious manœuvres"—"atrocious proclamations"—"glaring impudence and hypocrisy"—"infamous aggressions"—"public schools of every false doctrine, and houses of perdition"—"abominable writings and infamous spectacles"—"destruction of modesty, honesty, and virtue"—"annihilation of justice, and shaking of the foundations of religion and society"—"horrible invasion"—"criminal and sacrilegious excesses"—"lively bitterness"—"wicked and execrable spoliation"—"frightful usurpation"—"audacity and insolence"—"detestable designs"—"odious aggression"—"contempt of all laws"—"lamentable times"—"detestable events"—"barbarous violation"—"violent spoliation"—"parricidal armies of a degenerate son"—this is pretty well for a meek

and patient martyr. Of course the whole concludes, in the fashion of enraged ecclesiastics, with a prayer of remarkable bitterness for the "desired conversion" of the offenders' hearts.

The situation is undoubtedly critical, and the prospect of help is decidedly remote. The "faithful and noble hearts," calumniously called mercenaries, who were lately arrayed in defence of the holy see against the unbelievers, are gone, as the pope piously trusts, to the arms of the Houris. As to the Catholic princes and nations, who are they? Those old supports upon which the Catholic theocracy rested have one by one given way. Naples is defunct. Austria is in a fair way soon to require the last offices of the Church. The worldly ministers of Spain have just sent the queen's confessor and her favorite nun to the right-about. Sardinia has turned "parricide." The eldest son of the Church, indeed, still remains, but he stands smoking his cigar with the unimpulsive Thouvenels and Mornys at his side, and considering how the greatest "loot" may be made out of his holy mother's peculiar situation. As the king of Naples says, all the world looks on at this impiety "in stupefaction, but impassively!" To make it more heartrending, it was this very pope himself that commenced the movement by which the great confederation of Catholic monarchies has been laid in the dust. He it was that, by his "alarming attempt to govern by the rule of veracity in the chair of St. Peter," loosened from the mountain side the first handful of snow which soon gathered the velocity and volume of the now resistless avalanche. Madame Tussaud's figure of "the benevolent Pope Pius IX." is not yet entirely effaced from our minds. This abject attitude of despair was not the one in which the pontiff was always seen. These miserable screams for help, to a world in which no help is to be found, were not the accents always heard from that voice. A well-meant attempt to reconcile antiquated falsehood with modern truth, and deeply seated corruption with just government, has brought the patrimony of St. Peter, and much besides, to these "bitter agonies" and "incredible pains."

If the pope could muster spirit enough to show one particle of silent dignity under his misfortunes, he might command a good deal of pity. There is no doubt that, looking at the matter from his point of view, he may naturally consider himself betrayed. It is not an open enemy that hath done him this wrong. The canon which are wellnigh heard in the Vatican are not those of a Protestant Cromwell. It is a Catholic power that is robbing the pope of his dominions, and robbing him under prettexts and with



professions of reverence and obedience which add the bitterness of mockery to that of spoliation. Pius IX., like Charles I., sees war levied against him in his own name, by his most loyal and humble servants, and finds himself stripped of every thing in order the better to secure his dignity and power. He well knows that at the bottom of the whole conspiracy is the unscrupulous French adventurer to win whose favor he prostituted every religious principle and every sacred name, and who, while it suited his purpose, devoutly promised support and protection in return. The pope declined, it is true, to crown Louis Napoleon with his own hand. It was scarcely to be expected that he should so outrageously insult the whole Legitimist party of France. But the whole influence of the French Church was shamelessly exerted to consecrate and to conciliate to ecclesiastical interests a tyranny which, immoral and atheistical as it was, promised to be the friend of all who were the enemies of liberty and truth. The whole Catholic world rang, under the inspiration of its chief, with adulation of "the great man who had saved France," and, in the emulous contest of sycophancy, sycophant bishops carried off the polluted palm. These intriguers now see what it is to serve religion by means which worldly politicians of untainted character would scorn to employ. They, too, may swell the penitential cry, "*Discite justitiam moniti et non temere Deos.*" They blessed perfidy and violence when perfidy and violence seemed to be on their side, and how shall they curse them now? The wheel has come full circle. Once it was the turn of liberty to suffer, now it is theirs. Perhaps Infallibility might have been expected to foresee that gross moral apostasy would lead to retribution.

Yet if the pope has in him one spark of

apostolic spirit, the better course is still open to him. Giving up to the spoiler his temporal power, he may yet remain, and his successors may for a while remain, spiritually at the head of Southern Europe. Pius IX., in the depth of his humiliation, owns the allegiance of nobler hearts than his own. At this moment he receives, in the dedication of M. de Montalembert's work on Western Monachism, an assurance that his moral dominion over religious natures is not altogether lost. The ecclesiastical system which he represents is deeply rooted in old associations and in the temperament of the southern nations. Nothing is yet ready, at all events, to take its place, and human faith will not endure a void. Desperate as the case is, it is not without precedent, or "unheard of till these days." A pope has before now beheld, from his refuge in the castle of St. Angelo, the armies of a "parri- cidal son" of the Church not only "under the walls of his beloved capital," but ranging with sword and fire through the streets of Rome. From that blow the papacy recovered, though with dimmed lustre and diminished power. If it is not planted on an eternal rock or upheld by supernatural agency, it is planted on and upheld by deep moral necessities in the hearts of those over whom it has so long held sway. It will, in all human probability, linger on in some form; and all but extreme fanatics must desire that the form in which it lingers should be such as to make it a source of morality rather than of immorality to those who may have no better guide. The one hope of such a result is that the pope should place himself in the hands of that noble party of Catholics of which M. de Montalembert is the type; but while Antonelli is at his master's ear, this hope is but another name for despair.

**LOCAL SUPERSTITIONS: CORNWALL.**—A lady who was staying lately near Penzance, attended a funeral, and noticed that whilst the clergyman was reading the burial service, a woman forced her way through the pall-bearers to the edge of the grave. When he came to the passage, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," she dropped a white cloth upon the coffin, closed her eyes, and apparently said a prayer. On making inquiries as to the cause of this proceeding, this lady found that a superstition exists among the peasants in that part, that if a person with a sore be taken secretly to a corpse, the dead hand passed over the sore place, and the bandage afterwards dropped upon the

coffin during the reading of the burial service, a perfect cure will be the result. This woman had a child who had a bad leg, and she had followed this superstition, with a firm belief in its efficacy. The peasants also to the present day wear charms, believing they will protect them from sickness and other evils.

The wife of the clergyman of the parish was very charitable in attending the sick, and dispensing medicines, and one day a woman brought her child having sore eyes, to have them charmed, having more faith in that remedy than in medicines. She was greatly surprised to find that medicines only were given to her.—*Notes and Queries.*